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Correspondence

The governor regrets

Albany, N.Y.

To the Editors: I read your November 1 editorial — "To Admit Diversity and Endorse Discussion" — and agree that there's need for a greater degree of both clarity and charity in setting the "ground rules for dissent, dialogue, and pluralism in the American Catholic world on the matter of abortion."

After my speech at Notre Dame [September 13, 1984] and other speeches and articles by politicians, theologians, and bishops, I felt — as others did — that the level of the dialogue had been raised a notch or two.

Recently, however, there appears to be considerable backsliding, with more frequent attempts by some to proscribe and ostracize those who disagree with them, to place their Catholicism in quotation marks.

I regret that trend because it tends to put a halt to public discourse and to encourage strategies that are divisive and, perhaps more important, nonproductive. But I'm hopeful that we will return to a more reasonable starting point for discussion. Statements like yours of November 1 prove that we can and warn that we must. You've done us all a great service.

MARIO M. CUOMO
Governor of New York

Appropriate ignorance

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: A word rarely used in discussions of the political complications and ramifications of the church's teaching on abortion is "appropriate." There is no loss in Governor Cuomo's not pursuing his *political* goals by his not speaking before the National Conference of Catholic Charities. It is simply not appropriate that he do so. There is no loss in the cancellation or delay of a second "pro-choice" ad. It is simply not appropriate that such discussion — if that is what it is meant to be — take place in a public secular forum.

No lid need be clamped over either lay or clerical Catholics who seek to investigate the ways in which the unfortunate law of the land might be lived with while awaiting its change, but the forums for investigation and discussion must be carefully chosen so as not to mislead the faithful who seek to know and live church teaching, not the teachings of politicians of either church or state.

I would submit to you that Msgr. J. Jerome Boxleitner's upsetment at losing "an opportunity to discern a major issue in the Catholic church today, namely, the right of a person to address us even though we may not entirely agree with the presenter's views in all areas," is misplaced. I can think of nothing less appropriate than a politician who dissents from Catholic teaching lecturing a Catholic organization on moral theology. Governor Cuomo has not, as you suggest in your editorial [November 1], been "publicly delegitimated." He has simply been treated appropriately. That is, he has been ignored. PHYLLIS ZAGANO

Stretching the meaning

Tulsa, Okla.

To the Editors: Your November 1 editorial entitled "To Admit Diversity and Endorse Discussion" observes that "On the issue of the most prudential anti-abortion strategy, we believe Governor Cuomo is more right than wrong." Whatever else may be said about Governor Cuomo's public record on abortion, it stretches the ordinary meaning of words to refer to it as an "anti-abortion strategy."

Governor Cuomo has not made a secret of his public policy position on abortion. He has, without qualification, identified himself as "pro-choice." He has bragged in public that he had "fought harder than anybody" to assure that abortion is available to *all* women regardless of income (*New York Times*, August 8, 1982). He has opposed any bills that are designed to restrict access to abortion. He even opposed legislation requiring parental consent for abortions performed on minors. He insists that tax dollars be used to expand the availabilty of abortions. Whatever the governor's intentions, his strategy will have two predictable effects in New York. It will strengthen his candidacy for Democratic party nominations, and it will lead to an increased number of abortions. But let's make a pact. With effort I will refrain in this letter from calling it a "pro-abortion strategy." But in return please discontinue trying to pass it off as an "anti-abortion strategy."

As an individual member of the National Conference of Catholic Charities (NCCC) and as the Executive Director of an agency member of that organization, I would like to make several observations on the controversy discussed in your editorial:

— It seems to me that a major organization like NCCC confers special honor on a person when it selects him to deliver the keynote address at its annual national meeting. To avoid extending such an invitation to a person because of his objectionable public record on a centrally important issue is *not* the same as avoiding dialogue with him.

— As I understand it, the bishops who protested the invitation to Governor Cuomo are heads of diocesan agencies which are dues-paying members of NCCC. For all I know they may also be individual members of the Conference. One thing is clear, they are *not* outsiders who have no legitimate interest in the public posture of the organization. Indeed, there is a sense in which members become implicated in the public posture of organizations to which they belong, unless they make very clear their dis-

(Continued on page 124)

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Contents

Volume CXIII, Number 4	
Correspondence	98
Editorials	99
Voices in the night: *Gene Palumbo*	100
A needless shortage: *Nancy Amidei*	101
Prayer, politics, & doubt: *John Garvey*	102
Fighting with bare hands: *Jenna Mariechild*	104
A tangled revolution: *Roger Parker*	107
Dance: *Don McDonagh*	110
Screen: *Tom O'Brien*	111
Verse: *Elisabeth Murawski*	114

Books

Religious Book Week Critics' Choices: *Nathan A. Scott, Jr., Phyllis Trible, Robert C. Neville, Susan Annette Muto, David Herlihy, Kenan B. Osborne, Diana L. Eck, Eugene B. Borowitz, Drew Christiansen, Christine Downing* 116

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WHAT TO DO IN THE PHILIPPINES?

WHAT DO YOU do when Goliath refuses to be dispatched?

Last December Corazon Aquino reached down into the riverbed and scooped up a smooth stone: the will of the Filipino electorate to be done with corruption and dictatorship. President Ferdinand Marcos, out of the corner of his squinted eye, saw what was coming. But he did not step aside. Instead, he tried to shield himself with an election campaign full of threats, bribery, chicanery, mobilization of the army, and domination of the media — indeed, all the habits of corruption that are the product of nine years of military rule. Like the Philistine giant of old, Marcos treated his challenger with scorn: a housewife, a naif, a person manipulated by Communists or too weak to combat them. Neither the taunts, nor the censorhip, nor the thuggery, nor the sudden displays of government munificence, nor the love songs of the campaigning Imelda, nor the profits from the family's New York real estate could finally suffice. On election day, February 7, Mrs. Aquino put the stone in her sling and let fly. It struck home.

No doubt, President Marcos was stunned. He did not, however, fall on his face to the ground. Instead, he began to flail about. He propped himself up through fraud and blatant vote-stealing and dubious tallying. The thirty counters who, shaken by the mounting discrepancies, linked arms and ran out of the tabulating center in a fit of conscience, risked not only their jobs but their lives. The casualties of the election now number over one hundred.

"These and many other irregularities point to a criminal use of power to thwart the will of the people," declared the Filipino Catholic Bishops' Conference in a remarkable statement. "Yet, despite these evil acts, we are morally certain the people's real will for change has been truly manifested." In effect, the bishops have certified the election victory of Mrs. Aquino while the presidentially controlled National Assembly has certified the victory of Mr. Marcos.

The United States should make the same choice as the bishops. Not, of course, because the bishops demand it (they don't); but because democracy and our long-term national interest demand it. Washington (read, Mr. Reagan) should make up for the inexcusable waffling that followed the election and be at least as forthright as the bishops. "The way indicated to us now is the way of nonviolent struggle for justice . . . active resistance of evil by peaceful means," say the bishops. The bishops do not outline a plan of resistance; they pledge solidarity with those who are willing to act so "that the will of the people be fully respected." Should not the U.S. do as much?

What levers can the United States actually pull to support the Filipinos' choice and pave the way for Mr. Marcos's exit? Several.

One combination of carrot and stick is directed at the Marcos family itself and their close associates. Carrot: free and swift passage to a safe refuge out of the

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country. Stick: freezing the U.S. assets of the Marcos family as investigations of their extent and sources proceed.

A second lever is economic. We could encourage the International Monetary Fund to refuse further loans to the Philippines until Marcos is replaced by Mrs. Aquino or the winner of a fair election. The IMF has already delayed action on several loan programs in view of "chaotic" conditions in the Philippines — and the possibility that the nation's economy was injured further by Marcos's burst of campaign spending. Meeting IMF conditions is also a prerequisite for hundreds of millions in new loans from commercial banks, banks which have recently rescheduled nearly $6 billion in existing Philippine debts. Plenty of opportunities for Washington pressure here, as there are in the matter of sizable loans that Japan is already hesitant to renew to the Philippines. A firm U.S. example would strengthen the Japanese and other allies to make their lending contingent on a Marcos abdication. Obviously, U.S. economic and military aid can be held in escrow until Manilla bows to democracy. And as the Philippines' largest trading partner, the U.S. can exert any number of more subtle pressures on the Filipino business community, which is increasingly coming to recognize that their own interests and those of Mr. Marcos and Company are not necessarily the same.

A third lever involves focusing national and world attention on the safety of leaders in the Aquino campaign and Namfrel (National Movement for Free Elections) who may face assassination. Even as President Reagan, in a nationally televised press conference, was declaring American "neutrality," four provincial opposition leaders were murdered. Mutilated bodies of ten more opposition leaders were reported the following day. Mr. Evilio Javier, who was hunted down, shot, and killed, was a long-time opponent of Marcos, yet Marcos spokesmen blamed Communist insurgents for the killing. The Philippines could be swept by a wave of "disappearances." That likelihood would be considerably decreased by an official expression of U.S. outrage comparable to those Mr. Shultz addresses to Middle Eastern "state-sponsored terrorism."

Do these suggestions exaggerate American influence? Possibly. But the Philippines is a nation where Washington's blessing counts for a lot. Mr. Marcos has lasted as long as he has in part because he enjoyed that blessing. Now that he is already on the skids, removing Washington's stamp of approval may provide the critical shove. But the American decision must be clear and definitive. We do not recognize this government as legitimate, and we are not about to do so in response to a little maneuvering and tinkering.

But should the U.S. risk such an implicit endorsement of Mrs. Aquino, an untested leader whose claim to victory at the polls can never be technically substantiated? The U.S. delegation of poll watchers, led by Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana, actually estimated her share of the vote as between 60 and 70 percent, an amazing margin. Perhaps more important, Mrs. Aquino has displayed a promising mixture of both a capacity for compromise and an adherence to principle. Given the support she was able to mobilize — against formidable odds, despite government-controlled media, under threat of violence — Mrs. Aquino has demonstrated her stature and legitimacy as a national leader.

There is, of course, another kind of objection to this sort of U.S. "intervention" on behalf of democracy in the Philippines. It comes in three versions. The first is the principled rejection of *any* U.S. intervention — non-military as well as military — in the internal politics of other nations. The second is the *realpolitik* argument that Washington should look only to the security of its Clark and Subic military bases. The third is the debater's gambit that critics of Marcos are inconsistent if they oppose U.S. intervention in other parts of the world.

Our own answer must be brief. Only grave considerations of national security justify armed intervention. Other forms of influence must be judged by their purposes, by the circumstances, by the likely consequences. In the Philippines, we face an unusual situation. Democracy and a narrower *realpolitick* are happily coincident: we can call the Marcos bluff on our military installations; we cannot set our strategic concerns directly athwart the rising aspirations of Filipinos for self-government. Although the press may soon be swinging back from its present enthusiasm for the underdog, and Americans will learn that the Aquino coalition, too, has its feet of clay, nonetheless, Mrs. Aquino represents a rare quantity: a genuinely democratic, moderate force enjoying real popularity. In the biblical story, David scooped up five stones; he only needed one. Mrs. Aquino may need a handful more. The U.S. should be unmistakably in her camp, not skulking in Goliath's, and not pretending to stand on the sidelines.

Report from San Salvador

VOICES IN THE NIGHT

THE ARCHBISHOP CAME TO LISTEN

STANDING NEAR THE DOOR of St. Francis church in San Salvador on the evening of January 26, Archbishop John Quinn of San Francisco was overwhelmed by what he had just seen and heard. "It was like seeing the pages of the New Testament come alive again," he said. Quinn was ready to go home for the night. Others at the church would not be doing the same. This was wartime, and the parish priest was announcing that anyone who didn't want to venture onto the streets was welcome to spend the night in the church.

Quinn had already heard a good deal about the war in the twelve hours he'd been in El Salvador. He had come to speak at a church-sponsored peace forum. But before delivering his talk, he had met and spoken with two peasants who said they had just fled a major army operation fifteen miles from the capital. They spoke of aerial bombardments and ground attacks. They said that of the civilians who had been caught in the operation, some had been killed, others wounded, and many more captured. And they added that other civilians were

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still in the attack zones, surrounded by army troops and desperate for food and medicine.

Such major military drives have become more frequent in El Salvador. But for those who were deciding whether to accept the offer to spend the night at the church, there was more than the "regular" war to fear. Just that morning, it appeared the death squads had struck. In a sister parish, three young men were found, throats cut, hands bound.

The two parishes had once shared a common pastor — Fr. Octavio Ortiz. On January 20, 1979, as Ortiz was leading a retreat for teenage boys, the police and national guard had stormed the retreat house, battering down the metal gate with an armored car. The priest and four of the boys were murdered.

Ortiz is now buried behind the altar at St. Francis church, where Archbishop Quinn had just spent the evening. It had begun with prayers, Scripture readings, and songs. The people attending were from different parts of the San Salvador archdiocese. What they had in common was membership in the *comunidades de base* — the small, grass-roots Christian communities which have played a major role in the awakening of the Salvadoran church, and which have sprung up by the thousands in Latin America in the last fifteen years.

Members of the *comunidades* have been among the most common targets of the death squads. Last year, at a ceremony that marked the opening of a new chapel named after Archbishop Oscar Romero, the *comunidades* in one parish alone recalled six hundred of their members — "martyrs," they call them — who had been murdered in recent years. Individual members have had to abandon their homes because of threats and attempts on their lives; they now belong to *comunidades* that simply bear the name "the exiled." But all these communities are still very much alive, and this night members had come to speak with the archbishop about their lives and work.

Anecdotes helped provide the full flavor of the *comunidades'* experience. One woman drew sober laughter when she mentioned that while the community she belongs to is only a year and a half old, "We already have our own *oreja*." (*Orejas* are the much-feared spies whose tasks include fingering "subversives" for the death squads.)

Finally, one of the coordinators announced, "We have saved the best wine for last." Two men, each about sixty years old, catechists and pastoral workers from the war zones, came forward to speak to the archbishop. Not long before, a fifteen-member women's delegation had presented their *comunidades* with much-needed medicine. But a few days later, the army burst into their village and carried off the medicine.

Quinn was the final speaker. In flawless Spanish, he compared the *comunidades* to the apostolic Christian communities. Those communities, he said, had suffered greatly and borne the sign of the cross, but had also experienced joy. "And I see here among you, in spite of how you have suffered and been persecuted, a joy which is the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Some church officials have said that they see, in the *comunidades*, a threat to the church. Quinn saw something else. "They speak," he said, "in the language of Scripture. You can see that the word of God is the great source of strength in their lives. I think it's a clear manifestation of the power of God at work in the church." GENE PALUMBO

(Gene Palumbo is a free-lance writer and radio journalist who reports often from El Salvador for National Public Radio.)

Affordable housing

A NEEDLESS SHORTAGE

THE BUDGET SLAMS THE DOOR

AMERICA'S postwar housing boom was long the envy of Europe. While Austrian "newlyweds" kept their names on a waiting list and lived with their in-laws, many young Americans were buying their own homes, and many more were becoming renters. Public housing (which began fifty years ago) expanded greatly with the landmark Housing Act of 1949. Cities and towns of every size got help to upgrade housing codes, increase the number of affordable housing units, and keep urban areas liveable.

Now all that has changed. Much of the low-cost housing stock in the nation is badly in need of repair. Public housing has waiting lists nationwide (e.g., 60,000 just in Miami), and owning a home is beyond the reach of most citizens. When the National Low-Income Housing Coalition set out to quantify, by state, the number of people needing low-cost housing, and the number of rental units available at a price they can afford, they found, in a study released this month, two, three, even four times as many people as units.

In Portland, Oregon, where an estimated 3,500 homeless can be found in just the "downtown core," Tim Hornbecker of St. Vincent de Paul's says, "We've never had so many families come to us who are just living in their cars. Camping within city limits is illegal, so they're 'camping' in the parking lots near churches," and coming to St. Vincent's for food, clothes, and a place to wash. Generally, Hornbecker says, the families get evicted because they can't keep up with the rent. He tries to negotiate with landlords to keep the families housed, but apartments are scarce, rents are rising, and a lot of people just don't earn very much. In January, St. Vincent's was getting over two hundred calls a day for help.

For Hornbecker and his staff of three (plus five regular volunteers, and up to a thousand occasional volunteers), President Reagan's latest budget proposals spell disaster. In 1981, when Mr. Reagan took office, the federal government was spending about $40 billion for a variety of low-income housing programs: rent supplements, rehabilitation of deteriorating housing stock, urban homesteading, housing for the elderly and handicapped, loans for rural housing. For the coming fiscal year, 1987, Mr. Reagan wants to spend just a little over $2 billion for housing, and eliminate many federal housing programs entirely: public housing (now home to about 4 mil-

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lion people), rural housing, housing for the elderly and disabled, and most of the funds available to maintain existing housing stock. In addition, the president hopes to end the Farmer's Home Administration, and severely limit the availability of mortgage assistance.

Meanwhile, Portland is only one city where affordable housing is in short supply, and where housing assistance is but one of the casualties in the president's FY 1987 budget. Most federal grant programs aiding cities would be eliminated or cut severely, as would funds for urban mass transit. Overall, non-defense programs would *lose* $28 billion in the president's budget ($9 billion just from programs serving poor people). The Pentagon would *gain* $16 billion.

If a city like Portland did want to make up for lost federal housing funds, it would be hard-pressed to do so when money for sewage treatment, police and fire protection, roads and bridges, community development, and a broad range of social services are also being cut.

It needn't be that way. If the president and Congress were to adopt a minimum corporate tax, of the sort in the House-passed version of tax reform, that one item alone would generate about $40 billion — more than enough to forestall any new cuts in housing and every other domestic program. If, in addition, they were to put an end to the spending and contracting abuses now tolerated in the Pentagon's budget, that would free up $20 billion — enough to do something about, among other things, the crisis in affordable housing.

For the moment, however, Isaiah is being stood on his head: this is a budget for beating plowshares into swords.

NANCY AMIDEI

(Nancy Amidei frequently reports on poverty, hunger, and human services issues in these pages.)

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

PRAYER, POLITICS, & DOUBT

IF WE BELIEVE WHAT WE PROFESS

"If your prayers are truly sincere, every day a new fervor will appear, a new thought of which you were unaware before, and that will give you new strength. You will understand then that prayer is education."

From "Thoughts and Teachings of the Elder Zosima" in The Brothers Karamazov

DO WE BELIEVE, really, what we claim to believe? This isn't only a question of hypocrisy versus true belief, but something more subtle, pervasive, and strange. We pray the creed every Sunday and say that we look for the judgment of Christ at his coming again in glory, and for life in the age to come.

The question which ought to strike us more than it does is whether we honestly mean this as a declaration of belief, or whether it is not rather a sort of flag we wave periodically to indicate what party, among all the religions of the world, we might be identified with in case the Martian sociologist we've been expecting lands at last. It is too easy for us to see belief as something which is handed on to us from outside, with which we are from then on identified. The Maronite Christians in Lebanon are divided from their Islamic and Druse compatriots less by genuine belief than by this use of creed-as-party and the acceptance of religion as a heritage, a loyalty very close to regional or ethnic loyalty. This is true as well of the divided Christians of Northern Ireland.

There are elements of this familial and ethnic attachment to religion which are good and enriching. However we become believers, it has to do with a handing on, and to be ungrateful to the community from which we have received the language of belief would be wrong. But that community of belief can also be limiting and distorting.

When loyalty to those who have handed on belief is considered more important than the belief itself, when the belief is not seen as something which calls us to transformation but rather as a totem of the tribe to which we belong, religion is less like the burning bush which Moses encountered than it is like the fire lit under heretics. The difference is that God lights the fire in one case, and we in the other. All fire looks alike to some people, and it is easy for those who have no feeling for religion to refuse to make any distinction between the belief which transforms and the belief which murders.

Religion can be God working among us; or it can be the weapon we use against others by stressing the difference between ourselves, who possess the truth, and all those others who do not. This is not only unkind of us, even potentially deadly; it is heresy, because truth is not something we can possess. We can hope to serve truth, by looking for it humbly, more aware of our darkness than the light. The light isn't something we own or could possibly own; where we encounter it, it is a gift which we cannot contain. We can be grateful for it, and gratitude should make us generous rather than possessive.

It is relatively easy to see how this applies to the most hideous political conflicts, in Lebanon and in Ireland. We see the division between genuine and corrupted belief, and mourn it. On the one hand, the average Christian will say — and mean it — that he or she believes in the resurrection of the body and the life of the age to come, that Christ's death was for all. On the other, this does not seem to remove or transform the thirst for retribution, or lead to compassion for the enemy, even though this is an essential part of the teaching of Christ. We find it easy to see that contradiction.

But in less dramatic ways we live that contradiction too, and make the more

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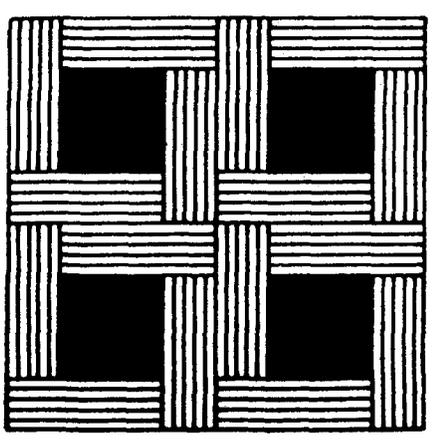
obvious and deadly contradictions possible by our own half-belief. In an essay called "Two Cities," the Orthodox theologian Sergius Bulgakov paraphrases Ruskin: "We generally believe in immortality so as to avoid preparing for death, and disbelieve in it so as to avoid preparing for a future life" (*A Bulgakov Anthology*, London, SPCK, 1976). Most of us, practically speaking, live out this observation. Our belief is divided between appreciation for the story of Christ and a hope that it will be true, on the one hand, and on the other an unwillingness to behave completely as if it really were true. We believe just enough to move away from one aspect of reality, and hedge our bets enough to avoid the other. It seems to work well enough within the small frame we know best.

But what would it mean really to believe in the judgment of Christ and the life of the age to come? I think that for most of my life this has meant a partisan rather than a personal acknowledgment. If I really took the words of Jesus to heart — "What I say to you, I say to all: watch" — or if I really thought that there were an imminent possibility of his return, a real flash from horizon to horizon for which I should, from moment to moment, be ready, I would live differently. My relations with others would change. I would worry less about accumulation and retirement plans and more about the Lazarus outside my gate. If I thought that everyone with whom I dealt were truly destined to a life infinitely longer than the life of any star, and knew that I had a major responsibility for that life, I would act differently.

I have such wonderful resolves, lots of good intentions. My mistake is that they form so large a part of my conscious life that I could wind up thinking they offer a serious clue to my being, rather than a clue to what I want to be. That is very tempting. Granting that what I want to be has something — however little — to do with what I am, it is in fact much less important than the less consoling, much more hollow actual thing I am at this moment. That is much more mysterious, unformed, difficult to see, and unedifying than any of my intentions. But it is this vague bundle of desire, dissatisfaction, emptiness, and desire pulling in all directions which constitutes whatever it is that I can truly call myself, and it is this cloud which stands before the unknowable God in prayer and is revealed in all its neediness. The form of religion which fills up the emptiness by colonizing it with our desires, dressed up in noble-looking disguises, is the most destructive.

There are all sorts of preacherly exhortations to pray from where you are, to express your own needs straightforwardly, candidly, right from the heart. That's all right, as far as it goes, but it is essential to understand that we stand before an unknowable God as people who really do not know who we are. To pray from "where we are" can involve little more than reinforcing a false self, if it means facing the unknown with an image of the unknown we want to have, and facing it with a picture of ourselves which is appealing. When prayer means meeting one illusion with another it can feel wonderful and can reinforce all sorts of positive emotions. At the spiritual level it is worthless.

Our honest doubts and our realization of emptiness matter more, spiritually, than what some would regard as firm belief. They must, however, be turned in the direction which prayer (beginning with the prayer Jesus gave us) indicates. Though prayer is much more than words, and sometimes does not involve words at all, the words of prayer are extremely important. Frequently their importance is not that they come from the heart but that they instruct it. The prayer which tells us that we are forgiven to the degree that we forgive does not only come from where we are naturally; in a most important sense it goes entirely against our natural inclination.



It is also not natural for us to believe in the resurrection of the body or the second coming of Christ. This is where the political importance of prayer comes in, because our reasons for taking certain positions — for example, opposition to capital punishment or to nuclear weapons — must in some essential ways differ from those taken by people whose outlook is totally secular. A relatively frequent charge brought by conservative Christians against people who oppose nuclear war is that the opponents of mass murder believe death to be the greatest of all evils. That may be true of secular opponents of nuclear war, and if I believed that we were all ultimately doomed to total extinction, it would seem like a very good reason to me. The Christian case against killing is not that death is the worst of all possible evils, but rather that every other human being is made in God's image, and has an eternal importance. To make that less important than a matter of state, to regard the honor we pay to God's image as less important than the international policy of any regime, is idolatry.

When I ask if we really believe what we say we believe, I don't mean that we will always feel, from the depths and without a shadow of doubt, that we will rise, that Christ is coming. But it is important to allow those beliefs to become prayer for us, to pay the fullest possible attention to them and allow them to transform us, despite our very human doubts. The father who felt anguish over his son's illness and asked Christ to cure him was asked, "Do you believe?", and his answer was, "I believe — but help my unbelief." That should be part of our prayer. In one of Dostoevski's notebooks there is an important and revealing passage. He refers to the chapter "Rebellion" in *The Brothers Karamazov*: "The atheistic position has *never* been stated in Europe with such force. And so it isn't as a child that I believe in Christ and profess Him; my 'hosannah' has passed *through a great crucible of doubt.*"

JOHN GARVEY

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Fighting with bare hands

JENNA MARIECHILD

CHIEF T.G. Gibson Mathebe of the baPedi ethnic group and his counselors, all wearing suits, pose for pictures outside their headquarters near the *kraal* made of bare and twisted tree branches. The *kraal* encloses the graves of the Mathebe family, and, on occasion, cows, and will, within days, be filled with the tear gas of the South African police. Chief Mathebe, heavy-set, places his hat on his head for one photo. He smiles. Visiting journalists snap shots. Under a tree outside the headquarters, three children are sitting by a fruit stand they have erected. It topples and they, laughing, fall with it. Goats graze. A woman walks on the dirt road holding a red umbrella to protect her from the hot sun.

To this setting in Moutsie, sixty miles north of Pretoria, the South African government promises to bring "development" once Moutsie is incorporated into the homeland of KwaNdebele. But the 120,000 people of Moutsie fiercely reject incorporation. It would mean the loss of their South African citizenship, the status of aliens in the land of their birth, and rule by a people — the Ndebeles — to whom they gave hospitality in the 1920s and have ever since considered their subjects.

"We don't want to be in the 'fertile future' of KwaNdebele," Moutsie salesman Elias Mputle Makitla, forty, told me. "If South Africa is tired of us, why don't they deport us to another African state? Let them do it openly so the world can see what it is they are doing, how they are oppressing us."

Pretoria has informed Moutsie that if it does not want to be incorporated into KwaNdebele, its people can be removed to an area near Immerpan, fifty miles away.

"We refuse to be resettled," Moutsie MP Godfrey Mathebe told me. "We've been here for over two centuries."

Resettlement would mean losing their land and all they have built up in Moutsie over the years.

Pretoria has refused four times to hold a referendum allowing the people to vote on whether they want to be incorporated into KwaNdebele.

Laughing bitterly, MP Mathebe, says: "They tell us a referendum would be too expensive."

PRETORIA devised the "homeland" policy in 1959, partly in order to defuse international criticism of the apartheid system of racial segregation under which 5 million whites rule 24 million blacks. By introducing a "homeland" for each major black ethnic group, Pretoria could claim that while blacks had no vote in South Africa, they could exercise their political rights in their own "homelands." The homelands cover only 13 percent of South Africa's area. So this policy allowed Pretoria to treat blacks as foreigners with no rights in 87 percent of the country.

For full implementation of this racial "separate development" policy, the homelands must accept "independence" from South Africa. Four have done so. Others resist.

Connie Mulder, then Minister of Bantu Administration and Development, explained in 1978: "If our policy is taken to its logical conclusion as far as the black people are concerned, there will not be one black man with South African citizenship. . . . Every black man in South Africa will eventually be accommodated in some independent new state in this honorable way and there will no longer be a moral obligation on this parliament to accommodate these people politically."

Residents of "independent" homelands do not qualify for South African passports or pensions. They may be refused admission to South Africa and, if admitted, may be deported as if they were aliens.

The homelands essentially serve as labor reserves for white industry. Only the men needed as migrant laborers are given permission to enter white areas. They live in grim hostels, forbidden to bring their wives and children with them. Back in the homelands, where few jobs are available, women and children often go hungry. The high infant mortality rate and levels of malnutrition in many homelands, cause critics to characterize the homeland policy as genocide.

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The fiction that a homeland is a nation separate from South Africa is vividly exposed by the fact that a homeland is not necessarily even a geographical entity. One homeland may consist of several distinct parts separated by areas where whites live. Unlike blacks, enfranchised whites can and do refuse to be "resettled" to accommodate Pretoria's homeland consolidation plans. So the homelands weave around the white spots. Lebowa, for example, consists of six distinct areas. The financial dependence of the homelands on Pretoria also reveals their lack of any meaningful independence. Pretoria contributes 76.7 percent of the budget of the "independent" homeland of Transkei.

KwaNdebele, the last and smallest of the ten homelands, is the "nation" Moutsie refuses to join. It is a nation without tarred roads. It has no electricity, no waterborne sewage, no hospital, almost no agriculture. Its chief of state has a sixth-grade education. Its cabinet ministers — one of whom was tried for murder in 1984 — recently took literacy classes. Women may not vote or hold public office. Except for its capital, which is built up, KwaNdebele is, from end to end, a resettlement camp of tin shanties and mud huts.

People keep from starving by working in the neighboring industrial centers of Pretoria and Johannesburg. Many rise at 4 A.M. and return home at 10 P.M., spending up to five hours commuting. On weekends, they see their children.

KwaNdebele has agreed to become independent in 1986 — but only if it gets Moutsie, a sixty-five square-mile-district which would provide the new "nation" with its only hospital, fifty schools, large, well-established farms and commercial firms. Lebowa has refused independence. Pretoria excised Moutsie from the recalcitrant Lebowa in 1980 and handed it over to the more cooperative KwaNdebele in January.

The Black Sash, a South African women's anti-apartheid protest group, points out that there is a precedent for what is about to happen in Moutsie. Before the Transkei homeland took independence in 1976, it demanded that the Herschel and Glen Grey districts be given to it. The people in these districts refused incorporation. Pretoria insisted. Tens of thousands of people trekked to areas of the Ciskei, which at that time was not yet an independent homeland. They went to areas like Thornhill which soon became infamous because of malnutrition and high infant mortality. The Herschel and Glen Grey people are still living as impoverished refugees.

The Moutsie deal is exactly the same, the Black Sash notes. KwaNdebele insists that Moutsie be turned over to it before independence. Pretoria agrees, despite the adamant rejection of the idea by the overwhelming majority of Moutsie residents.

DURING my day-long visit to Moutsie with a Black Sash field worker and two other journalists, Moutsie leaders and residents explained why they oppose the incorporation. Their biggest objection by far is loss of their citizenship, but they also fear:

- That vigilantes, some of whom are members of the KwaNdebele government, and the KwaNdebele police, will loose a tremendous reign of terror against all non-Ndebeles after the incorporation. (The people of Ekangala township, who also resisted incorporation into KwaNdebele, have already suffered such violence, according to the Black Sash and the Ekangala Action Committee.)
- That they will be discriminated against in the granting of pensions and trading licenses. (Moutsie leaders allege that the KwaNdebele cabinet ministers own most of the businesses in the homeland and practice nepotism in the granting of licenses.)
- That their children will be forced to receive their schooling in an alien language — Afrikaans, the language of the Dutch-descended whites.
- That even on the telephone, they will not be allowed to speak their own Sotho language. (MP Mathebe reports that the telephone operator from KwaNdebele has already begun breaking in on conversations in Moutsie and telling people they must speak in Zulu or the call will be disconnected.)
- That their chiefs will be dethroned. (They have received a notice to that effect from KwaNdebele.)
- That they will be ruled by men much less educated than they, and will be denied religious freedom.

There are precedents for what happens to members of different ethnic groups at the hands of homeland leaders. For example, when Bophutatswana, the homeland of the Tswana ethnic group, became independent in 1977, non-Tswanas living there faced exactly the same harassment and discrimination as the baPedi of Moutsie now fear.

In expressing their fears over the incorporation, Moutsie residents emphasized that it is not the *people* of KwaNdebele who are their enemy.

"The South African government is trying to present this as tribal strife," said one youth leader. "But we are not engaged in tribal politics. Members of different groups in Moutsie are united in not wanting to be incorporated."

About 90,000 Moutsie residents are Sotho of the baPedi ethnic group, and 30,000 are of other ethnicities, including the Ndebeles, Zulus, Swazis, Tswanas, and Vendas.

Some residents pointed out that the people of Moutsie and KwaNdebele have lived side by side in peace for many years, and the strife only broke out when Pretoria announced its plans to consolidate the homeland. They say that when the Ndebele chiefs originally trekked to this area in the 1920s, Chief Mathebe's grandfather sheltered them, allowing them to live in his territory.

While the people of KwaNdebele are not the enemy, Moutsie residents speak bitterly of the homeland leaders, who are appointed, not elected. The six-member KwaNdebele cabinet was appointed by the chief of state, assisted by white officials seconded by Pretoria. Residents have referred to the homeland leaders as gangsters who maintain their power with the help of hired vigilantes and who use that power to enrich themselves.

In 1985, the Reverend Frank Chikane, a vice-president of the anti-apartheid coalition United Democratic Front (UDF), urged homeland leaders to resign and refrain from participation in the "evil" apartheid system. He accused them of being guilty of the forced removals of Africans from their homes,

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and the imposition of homeland citizenship, among other things. It would be left for the masses to decide the price they would have to pay after liberation, said Chikane, who was one of the twelve UDF leaders acquitted of treason charges in December.

"Homeland leaders are absolutely tyrannical," comments Ethel Walt of the Black Sash. "That is the caliber of people who will be prepared to cooperate with the South African government."

MP Mathebe, representing Moutsie in the Lebowa Assembly, points to KwaNdebele's Minister of Interior, Piet Ntuli. In 1984, Ntuli was tried for the murder of a Lebowa legislator who had led resistance to the incorporation of his community into KwaNdebele. Mathebe laughs cynically when reporting that Ntuli was acquitted.

DRIVING over rutted dirt roads, we pay a call on Chieftainess M. Mashung, who rules over 3,000 persons in this area. Three cars containing Chief Mathebe and his counselors, youth leader Issac Mohnamoiane, MP Mathebe, and the four white visitors, drive past many goats, fields, mud houses, a few trees, people stopping to stare at our procession. We drive down an incline and then, gingerly, through a creek at its shallowest point. We drive up an incline, make a difficult turn onto a sandy road, and stop a short distance from the headquarters of the Chieftainess. Waiting for us inside are her counselors and headmen.

The headquarters is a one-story, one-room building. At the front is a cement stage with a line of chairs on it and a table at its center. We are asked to sit on the stage. The headmen — one an old man with white hair and a beard, dressed in a bright blue coat and leaning on a cane — sit on the bench facing us.

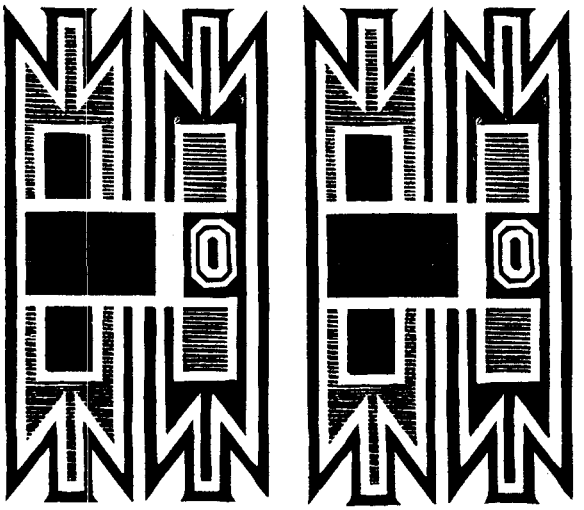
To our left, on the cement wall, is a calendar from the Grootekipat Trading Company. Straight ahead, through a long, narrow window slit, we see a cow grazing under a tree. To our right the building's only door, its blue paint weatherworn, stands open to the warm spring air of late November.

We wait on the stage. Then the Chieftainess, regal and somber, appears in the doorway. We rise. Wearing a blue jacket and skirt, she stands, a dark blue turban enclosing her hair. She does not smile or acknowledge our presence. She walks to the stage and sits in the center beside her advisor.

The Chieftainess and her advisors tell us, through an interpreter: "Not a single member of the community wants to be incorporated into KwaNdebele. Not one. Sitting in this room are the headmen who have come to say that they do not want to be incorporated into KwaNdebele. We would have invited the whole community who would tell you the same — they do not want to be incorporated into KwaNdebele — but there is not room for all of them here."

Was the Chieftainess angry at not being consulted on the incorporation? She speaks. The interpreter, Mohnamoiane, turns to us: "She does not even want to hear the word 'KwaNdebele,' she is so angry."

They say, as everyone here says, that if Pretoria persists with the incorporation, there will be violence.



On November 18, Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning J. Christiaan Heunis met with Moutsie leaders, including Chief Mathebe and Godfrey Mathebe, and told them that plans for the incorporation were final and would take effect in January. Nothing they could say could change that decision.

Moutsie leaders attempted to hold a meeting at Chief Mathebe's *kraal* on December 1 to report back to the community on their meeting with Heunis. The government banned the meeting. When people gathered regardless of the ban, troops dispersed them with tear gas.

The leaders took legal advice and again petitioned to hold a meeting. Addressed to Chief Mathebe, the document giving them permission stipulated that they might meet on December 8 on condition that only four named persons (two chiefs and two members of parliament) address the gathering, and that

> . . . no turn to speak shall be allowed to any other person attending the gathering; that the gathering shall only be utilized to convey the result of the discussions you had with Minister Heunis to the people of Moutsie; that no actions or counter-actions regarding the incorporation of Moutsie into KwaNdebele shall be discussed; that no speaker shall be allowed to incite, instigate, intimidate or by any other means influence any person to oppose the incorporation of Moutsie into KwaNdebele; and that the South African Police be permitted to attend the gathering.

The document, dated December 4, is signed by the magistrate for the district of Moutsie, Paul Abraham Pretorius.

Such conditions made an approved meeting to discuss the incorporation impossible, a young Moutsie teacher reported at a meeting of the UDF in Johannesburg December 11. So Moutsie residents met in defiance. South African police and soldiers dispersed this second meeting with tear gas.
prevent meetings. "Moutsie has been converted into a military base," the teacher said. "We can't breathe. If three of us walk together, the police stop us and ask where we're going and why there are three of us. We are trying to hold meetings behind closed doors in small groups."

According to eyewitnesses and newspaper accounts, on

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December 16, youth in Moutsie held an open-air meeting under a thatched roof. The police drove into the meeting. The youth ran. They burned down one home and two shops owned by people they believed to be informers. Anything associated with KwaNdebele was attacked. Cars with KwaNdebele license plates were stoned. Police teargassed the youth. One boy was shot in the leg. Soldiers detained ninety-six people. They picked up youths as young as eleven and twelve from the streets. Seething with anger, the community demanded the withdrawal of troops.

The next day two cameramen working for the British agency, World Television News, were arrested and charged with inciting unspecified violence in Moutsie.

Moutsie has been fighting the incorporation plans ever since they were first proposed in 1979, but now, as the incorporation relentlessly proceeds despite their protests, there is a particular desperation to the struggle.

Earlier, Moutsie leaders thought they would sue in court to stop the incorporation. But lawyers give them no hope. The white power structure wrote the laws, they point out, so the laws are on Pretoria's side.

Earlier, they had the support of the homeland Lebowa. But after years of battling against Moutsie's incorporation into KwaNdebele and warnings of bloodshed should the incorporation proceed, Lebowa's chief minister, Cedric Phatudi, is suddenly silent. Ethel Walt, of the Black Sash, reports that Phatudi's been offered the orange estates of Zebediela and a rail link from Zebediela to the Lebowa capital in exchange for relinquishing Lebowa's claim to Moutsie. Abandoned by their allies and offered scant hope by the law, they see no defense but to fight desperately and call upon the world's people to come to their aid.

"We are fighting with our bare hands and they are fighting with guns," Makitla had told me on my visit to Moutsie. "I predict that from March onwards, there will be no business in Moutsie. We will close down to fight."

In Johannesburg some weeks later to attend a meeting on the crisis, Makitla recognizes me on the street and tells me of the violence in Moutsie the day before.

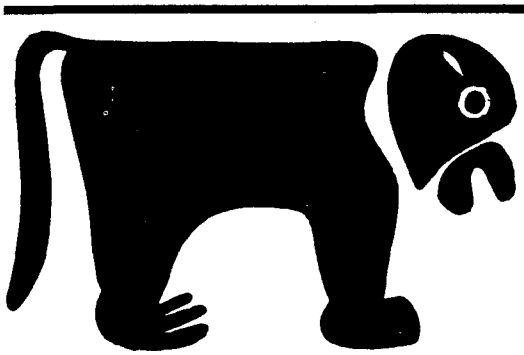
"What will happen now?" I ask him. "What is going to happen is that we have to die. We are not going to agree. The government is prepared to kill us. The outside world must know."

Two days later, a nineteen-year-old from Moutsie, recognizing me from the UDF meeting and knowing I am a foreign journalist, stops me on the campus of the University of Witswatersrand during a Christian youth conference. As black youths wearing T-shirts proclaiming, "No Peace Under Apartheid" and "The Future Is Ours!" pass around us, he tells me of the recent violence.

"We are appealing to the international community," he said, as I scribbled down his words. It was as if the youth, grim and urgent, were addressing a world he had never seen outside South Africa, an unknown territory inhabited by people who, he hoped, might care about the impending deaths in Moutsie. "This apartheid regime is oppressing people. It wants to strip black people of citizenship. If the government pursues the incorporation, they are killing the people because we are prepared to die resisting. We are appealing to the international community to help, to write letters of protest calling for a referendum in Moutsie, and to take it up with the United Nations. We are prepared to die."

In the following weeks, KwaNdebele vigilantes, beginning the feared reign of terror, abducted four hundred Moutsie residents, beat them up, and then returned them to Moutsie. By February 6, forty people had been killed in protests over the incorporation.

The dying has begun.



POLITICS & RELIGION IN ZIMBABWE

A tangled revolution

ROGER PARKER

IN ZIMBABWE, the world has ended. Its apocalypse was the revolution against Ian Smith's Rhodesian government in 1981. The result has not been a new heaven or a new earth, but a Marxist purgatory.

The people seated at table with me this evening are all white, longtime residents here in Harare (formerly Salisbury), the nation's capital. They do not know the world ended in 1981, and they act just as they did before. Like the characters in C.S. Lewis's novel, *The Great Divorce*, they maintain their dignity and the elegant manner that comes from good breeding, unaware that they now reside in purgatory. The black man standing immaculately at the end of the table in his servant's jacket gives them no clues. Impassive, he pretends he cannot hear the conversation, which turns to the Catholic church in Zimbabwe. The missionary orders have stopped sending new men — unfairly — all present at table agree, except, perhaps, the

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black servant who remains silent and motionless. No one laments the lack of African vocations.

The priests with me at dinner, quite elderly, came decades ago. They claim to understand the Africans, and maybe they really do; however, they appear almost totally out of contact with the surrounding realities. Perhaps it is because they are a little hard of hearing, and missed the explosion in 1981, when the world ended.

The church, about 8 percent of the total population, gives the impression of a black organization run by white people. Four of Zimbabwe's six dioceses have black bishops, but yet the black archbishop of Harare relies heavily on his astute and loyal English Jesuit secretary, who guides and protects him like an urbane guardian angel. The Catholics of Harare, white and black, regard the archbishop as weak, afraid, and not important. Two white bishops, Bishop Karlen of Bulawayo and Bishop Prieto of Hwange, are considered socially conscious and courageous.

My black priest friend tells me, speaking of my white priest dinner companions the evening before, "They are racists; we tell them at meetings that they must treat us differently; but they never change." He adds, his voice rising, "That is why there are no vocations!"

An elderly white priest laughingly refers to the Catholic Center at the Harare Cathedral as "the cheapest brothel in town." I ask what activities take place there. "Snooker tournaments and the like — lots of drinking." The bar at the center, unlike other bars, remains open on Sundays. The patrons are white. "Frightfully expensive, too expensive for the blacks," the priest tells me.

The largest Catholic charismatic prayer group, almost entirely African, met at the center every Sunday afternoon until recently. The white woman appointed by the archbishop to run the center made the group enter by the rear door. The bar patrons complained about the noisy singing, and the charismatics were told they could no longer meet at the center. Unable to find a place to meet, the charismatics have temporarily disbanded.

White society and black society seem to run on parallel and independent tracks. The only exchanges appear to be commercial — buying and selling from one another, or master-servant relationships where black serves white. Standards and customs differ, and social contact is infrequent.

Traditional religion in Zimbabwe holds that ancestral spirits return to inhabit the bodies and souls of their living descendants. Commonly, African Zimbabweans invite the souls of their deceased ancestors to enter their bodies. This practice forms the central core of traditional religions in Zimbabwe. As a result, spirit possession holds a high place in traditional religion and culture, with the usual resulting trance states, spirit-induced ecstasies, and emphasis on magic of all kinds. Witchcraft is rampant. And curses and spells are the stuff of everyday life.

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An African priest in Bulawayo assures me that possession by ancestral spirits forms an important part of Catholicism's inculturation here in Zimbabwe. He sees no difficulty in simply assimilating the ancestral spirit doctrines and practices into Catholicism. The argument runs like this: The church must be inculturated in the local matrix of custom and beliefs; ancestral spirit possession is deep in the mentality of all the tribes in Zimbabwe. The practice is acceptable because it is so close to Catholic attitudes toward prayers for the poor souls in purgatory.

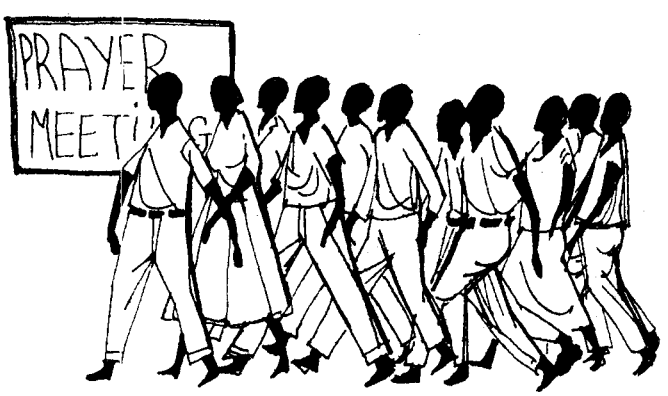
This analysis, of course, simply does not hold up. There is no similarity between the Catholic attitude toward the souls in purgatory and ancestral spirit possession. The Africans *invite* spirits (souls of the deceased) to *possess* them. Nothing in Catholic practice or doctrine corresponds to this.

Startled by such views from a priest, I ask a European missionary what is taught about ancestral spirits in the national seminary. He tells me that the professors stand divided on the issue, and that, reportedly, at least one African bishop in Zimbabwe strongly holds the traditional African ideas on ancestral spirits. When I point out that the traditional African ideas and practices are contrary to Catholic teaching and surely cause serious problems, he shrugs.

The only strong opposition to ancestral spirit possession among Catholics that I could find belongs to the Catholic charismatic renewal, a fledgling and struggling movement with few members. The Catholic charismatics that I spoke to told me that spirit possession among Catholics is not at all uncommon, and that many, especially men, must formally renounce such beliefs and practices and be freed from them through prayer before they are capable of using the common charismatic gifts of the Spirit such as praying in tongues.

In the charismatic renewal, the differences between white and black Zimbabweans can be seen clearly. The white population in Zimbabwe numbers only about two hundred thousand, or a little over 2 percent of the total population, and white people continue to leave at a rate of about six thousand a year. I would estimate the whites at about 6 percent of the total Catholic population. Nevertheless, there are some predominantly white charismatic prayer groups in Harare. Mostly middle-aged whites, they pray decorously.

The black and colored prayer groups, composed largely of young people, are expanding rapidly. (Zimbabwe is a youthful



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country with over half its population under fifteen years of age.) These charismatic groups pray exuberantly, sing loudly, praise God with no inhibitions and with echoes of traditional culture. An elderly white woman, with me at a black prayer meeting, muttered to me disdainfully, "Pure hysteria." It is not hysteria, however, but uninhibited Catholic pentecostalism with a strong African cast.

Zimbabwe Africans, with their tradition of possession by ancestral spirits, take naturally to pentecostalism's Spirit-filled manifestations. Pentecostal sects proliferate — over one thousand in Zimbabwe. The future of the Catholic charismatic renewal looks promising in Zimbabwe, although its African exuberance should increasingly disconcert the staid missionaries, mostly British and German.

Outside the charismatic movement, Catholics practice the regular Sunday Mass and ordinary piety. There are many black vocations to sisters' congregations.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH in Zimbabwe stays outside politics with very few exceptions, and religion in general seems to be an ineffectual formalism with no practical import. The prime minister, Robert Mugabe, and most of his cabinet are Catholic. No one seems to know whether any of them practices the faith. The consensus is: probably not.

Parliamentary sessions always begin with prayers, which appear to be a mere formality. Until not long ago, religion was taught in all government primary and secondary schools. Then it was simply dropped from the curriculum. To my knowledge, no one and no church protested.

In fact, the government professes to be Marxist. The nation's best friends and supporters are North Korea, China, Rumania, and Bulgaria. Zimbabwe's Marxism, however, appears unsophisticated and superficial. The official documents and the newspapers give every citizen the title of "comrade." Government speakers pay lip service to Marx's name, but they rarely, if ever, mention any of his ideas.

The economy, in reality, is capitalist. Zimbabwe depends heavily on the South African economy. As the South African economy crumbles and the rand weakens, Zimbabwe's economy will suffer. About 90 percent of all overseas imports to and exports from Zimbabwe pass to the sea by South African rail. The other 10 percent go to the quite inadequate port of Beira in Mozambique by a rail line protected from Mozambican guerrillas and bandits by a large contingent of Zimbabwe's army, with only partial success. If war breaks out in South Africa and the railway becomes inoperable, Zimbabwe will be almost completely cut off from its overseas trade.

"Socialism" in Zimbabwe means "communism." But the country's communism is less economic than political. Mugabe appears to follow the political model of Rumania. He and his party, ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union), have decided to make the nation a one-party state. And they work hard at the process of eliminating the other parties. Of these, two are made up mostly of whites, and have a diminishing influence. ZANU knows that, within a year or so, these will have negligible importance. The other African party, ZAPU (Zimbabwe African party, ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union), led by Joshua Nkomo, is a real problem.

(In 1963, after agitation in the black reserves of Rhodesia, the African National Congress Party split into two factions, ZANU (led by Ndabaningi Sithole, and later succeeded by Mugabe) and ZAPU (Nkomo). That same year, both parties were banned and their leaderships interned.)

The professed plan of Mugabe's ZANU is to simply eliminate Nkomo's ZAPU. One of ZANU's representatives in parliament has proposed seriously, with the sometimes amusing ingenuousness which characterizes Zimbabwe political statements, that the two parties merge: ZAPU could drop the last two letters of its name, and ZANU could drop the first two letters. The resulting party would then be called ZANU.

Another ZANU member of parliament suggested last August that Zimbabwe declare war on ZAPU and "wipe out this ZAPU and arrest its top leaders . . . ZAPU must be banned and its leadership locked up."

The police have already raided Nkomo's house and, at present, are investigating the documents they seized. ZANU politicians, in parliament and in the newspapers, regularly cry out for Nkomo's imprisonment. What keeps Nkomo out of prison is his restraining influence on ZAPU militants. Mugabe knows that with Nkomo removed, the armed bands of ZAPU dissidents that roam southern Zimbabwe would be even more of a problem than they are now.

Will Joshua Nkomo and his ZAPU eventually go the way of Ndabaningi Sithole (out of the country — the government will not renew his passport), Bishop Muzorewa (who fled the country after his defeat in the last election), and their followers? It seems most unlikely. ZAPU has a powerful tribal base.

Of the eight and a half million people in Zimbabwe, about seven million belong to Shona-speaking tribes. The Matabele number over a million, a strong minority. The Shona party is ZANU. Most of the Matabele support ZAPU. The Matabele people live in the south; their unofficial capital is Bulawayo.

The Shona-speakers back Mugabe. The Matabele back Nkomo. Even though Mugabe calls for a one-party state and publicly invites Nkomo and ZAPU to join ZANU, he knows that only forceful repression will weaken and eventually destroy the opposition party. He is confronted not only with a minority party, but with a hostile and warlike tribe whose members speak their own language, have their own customs, and possess the fierce spirit of their cousins, the South African Zulus.

Consequently, Mugabe has for some time carried on a reign of terror in Matabeleland. People active in ZAPU regularly disappear. Matabeleland looks like an occupied country. In effect, ridiculous as it sounds, Zimbabwe *has* declared war on ZAPU.

Coming into Bulawayo from the airport, we meet a roadblock manned by government police. My driver explains that they do this to check documents and "to be sure the vehicles are up to specifications." But the police neither ask for our documents nor examine the car. The roadblock has intimidation as its purpose, and I do feel intimidated. I feel

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outright fear later, when I walk past the "Stops and Ross Camp" just behind the Catholic bishop's house and the Dominican sisters' convent. This is the principal police base in Matabeleland. As in all the police camps in the south, the C.I.O. (Central Intelligence Organization, modeled on the K.G.B.) does its torturing and killing here.

The main days for torturing seem to be Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. At least, local residents tell me, that is when you can hear the screaming — especially at night. They tell me that the C.I.O. tortures people, sometimes to death, in an eight-cell block in the center of the extensive camp. Yet they can still hear the screams hundreds of yards away. The C.I.O. uses modern methods of torture, including electric shock. They operate directly under Prime Minister Mugabe, and answer only to him. The Bulawayo newspaper *The Chronicle* for August 28, 1985 quotes the Minister of State Security, Comrade Emmerson Munangagwa: "In this region [Matabeleland], security forces, acting in concert with each other, particularly on intelligence pertaining to these dissidents, will be more efficient in their efforts to eradicate these worrisome individuals."

What stand has the Catholic church in Zimbabwe taken with regard to the professed Marxism of the ruling party, ZANU, and the drive toward a one-party state? In an Easter, 1983 statement, the Catholic bishops directly addressed the problem of the brutal suppression of ZAPU and the persecution by the government of the Matabele people. Supporting the government in its efforts to preserve order in Matabeleland, the bishops condemn "methods which have been adopted . . . and have degenerated into brutality and atrocity," bringing about "the maiming and death of hundreds and hundreds of innocent people." The bishops state that "the facts point to a reign of terror caused by wanton killings, woundings, beatings, burnings, and rapings." They point to starvation in some areas due to government troops having deliberately cut off supplies of food and any access to food. And they "appeal to the government to use its authority to put an immediate stop to these excesses" ("Reconciliation Is Still Possible," Easter, 1983).

In a later pastoral statement of January 1, 1985, the bishops again say that they "are deeply saddened by the suffering of many people and the senseless loss of life caused by disunity, hatred, and ruthless hunger for power." This recent statement is weaker than the 1983 pastoral letter. But both statements are courageous.

Having a cup of tea with a lay official of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, I ask why the commission has made no statement concerning the brutalities and atrocities of government police and soldiers in Matabeleland. He looks frightened, and well he might be. No statement is planned.

The bishops have also confronted the Marxist orientation of the government. In their pastoral statement of January 1, 1984 they state their clear opposition to certain Marxist principles: atheism, class warfare as a means of positive transformation of society, and government force when persuasion fails. But in Zimbabwe, government authorities do not seem to be listening to the voice of religion.

Dance

MORRIS DANCING

MODERNIST & TRADITIONALIST

MARK MORRIS is a bright, keenly intelligent choreographer whose inventiveness has been apparent from his first solo appearances at the beginning of the eighties. If his own choreographic voice is as yet unfocused, the process of finding it continues to be a tantalizingly enjoyable event in the vanguard modern dance world.

Morris, like his contemporaries in the under-thirties group, matured into a world of experimentation in which mechanical repetition, drone music, and unisex handling of roles were the norm. To a great extent the work of the leading-edge choreographers was precise, emotionally restrained, and highly concentrated on form rather than content.

The dedicated integrity of such work was not and is not in question. There was a variety of reasons for such self-imposed limitations, the most notable one being a distrust of the heroic convictions that shaped modern dance in the period between the First and Second World Wars. That generation's passionate commitment to humanistic values lingered on through the fifties when younger choreographers began to find fewer and fewer values worth such unquestioned devotion.

The erosion of all institutions during the sixties and seventies left political, educational, religious, and artistic husks where vital organisms had once been. The younger modern dancers without any network of agreed-upon values to which to hitch their artistic futures decided that the inherent worth of technique, its discipline and purity, had an integrity not to be found elsewhere. Accordingly, a cool mathematical manipulation of form with minimal emotional display became an honest way to work.

Such studied concentration was elegant in its simplicity, subtle in inventiveness, and leisurely in development. It also became increasingly hermetic as it fed upon itself, deriving meaning from the demonstration of proficiency with a severely limited vocabulary of movement and gesture. The dramatic potential of encounters between male and female dancers was diffused by assigning highly similar movements to all and by carefully restricting costuming so that it emphasized similarities rather than differences of bodily form.

The resultant works tended to be presented on clear stages unencumbered by naturalistic props or décors. The result was movement clean as a whistle in limbo space. The message was the choreographers' facility in presenting flowing designs of increasing complexity. It was briefly exhilarating but in less-than-expert hands became tedious. There was a definite aridity built into the rigorous honesty of continuously elaborated form with diminished content.

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Morris found himself attracted to the technical aspects of the presentation but totally unsatisfied by the lack of emotional effect. He was a modernist by heritage, having danced in the companies of Laura Dean, Lar Lubovitch and Hannah Kahn, but a traditionalist by conviction, starting his career with the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble and briefly appearing in the Eliot Feld Ballet.

He has sought to reconcile both impulses by extracting characteristic movement styles from their historical contexts and presenting choreographic sketches in the manner of the originals, while remaining detached from the convictions of the artistic climate which produced them. This preoccupation with style has led him to examine the work of the heroic twenties and thirties and the decidedly anti-heroic sixties and seventies, as well as bedrock folk dance forms and classical conventions. The music selected for these explorations has been equally eclectic, including modernist player piano compositions by Conlan Mancarrow, electronic music with sports crowd noises, "low" art pop, country and western, and "high" art Handel, Stravinsky, Vivaldi and the "three B's," Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, among others.

He works with a medium-sized ensemble of fourteen dancers, devising solos and full company dances in addition to pieces for almost every other numerical grouping in between. Scenery doesn't seem to interest him, nor does stage apparatus to any great extent. He costumes his works simply, colorfully, and appropriately, with a nod to gender differentiation. The spectator is thereby encouraged to concentrate on suitably lit movement and to listen attentively.

Morris is a musically sensitive choreographer, as he demonstrated last December in his most recent series of programs at Dance Theater Workshop. "Retreat From Madrid" showed an ingenious use of eighteenth-century dance conventions to a Boccherini score of the same name. It was a formal dance for two couples who each demonstrated an elegance of gesture in approaching the audience, and then equally gracefully circled back upstage walking. It was a deft use of the older custom of dancing full out only while facing the audience. Neat footwork and baroque gesture were smoothly combined, and the homage underlined, by having the dancers' backs uncharacteristically turned to the audience when the lights came up, only to have them conclude with a polite bow facing forward at the end.

A similar two-dimensional look was presented by the three women and two men in "Frisson." Here the twentieth-century rhythms of Stravinsky were used by the dancers, moving vigorously in profile. The effect was like seeing an animated cardboard cutout. In a romantic mood, Morris devised a duet for himself and Teri Weksler, "One Charming Night," set to four Purcell songs. Alone at first, she flees from, and returns to, a seat where she twists and turns agitatedly. He enters by happily bounding toward her. During the course of the duet he is restrained in contrast to her emotional abandon, though he buries his face vampirishly in her neck before the final lift offstage. The relationship is never clearly spelled out and its humor derives from the contrast of her straightforward simplicity and his sinister ambiguity.

"I Love You Dearly," danced by Guillermo Resto to a Rumanian folk tune, was equally amusing for its ambiguity. Each stanza of the song begins with Resto upstage in a similar pose and develops into a series of appropriate solos echoing the music, but not slavishly following it. The style was folk, but the shaping of the dance was distinctly modern in sophistication.

Morris's own solo, "The Vacant Chair," was sensitively reflective of the three widely differing songs he chose, including a setting of Joyce Kilmer's "Trees." To that he offered tree-like configurations of the torso and limbs. For the opening song he combined vigorous marching with mock clumsy poses after starting with a paper bag over his head. In the final song, "End of a Perfect Day," he clomped around disjointedly and rushed off with the music stand on which was placed a different drawing to indicate the subject of each dance. The tone was gently ironic and humorous throughout.

As with all of the pieces presented during this season and previous ones, the viewer was repeatedly impressed with the craft and variety of Morris's dances. To a great extent, they are knowing commentaries upon dances of other times or other cultures as Morris tries one style and then another, pausing long enough to savor each before moving on. The process is intriguing, entertaining, and intelligent. But one longs for the real Mark Morris to stand up and speak for himself.

DON McDONAGH

Screen

ZOOMING DOWNHILL

CAVE BEAR & BRAZIL

THE CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR is a paleolithic *Perils of Pauline*. It's anthropology according to the Mall: everyone is American but grungy; nobody's hair is washed; their furs are greasy; and they walk stooped. They may talk in guttural language, chant some, and practice animism, but their sense of time and self make them folks 'jes like us. To what degree this ethnocentrism in the film derives from its source, Jean Auel's best seller on the transition between Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon man, those who have read the book will have to decide. The film is modern melodrama in stone-age drag, plus a pinch of mysticism.

The film doesn't even bother to distinguish its cave people anatomically: its Neanderthals have no sloping foreheads. Instead, we get sloppy Southern Californians, especially one hero whose open-mouthed expression seemed frozen in a vacuous "wow." The Cro-Magnon intruder is at least visually convincing: she is that Viking exclamation point, Daryl Hannah (the mermaid in *Splash*), whose acting here is perhaps fortunately limited to a few grunts, some hand gestures, and a

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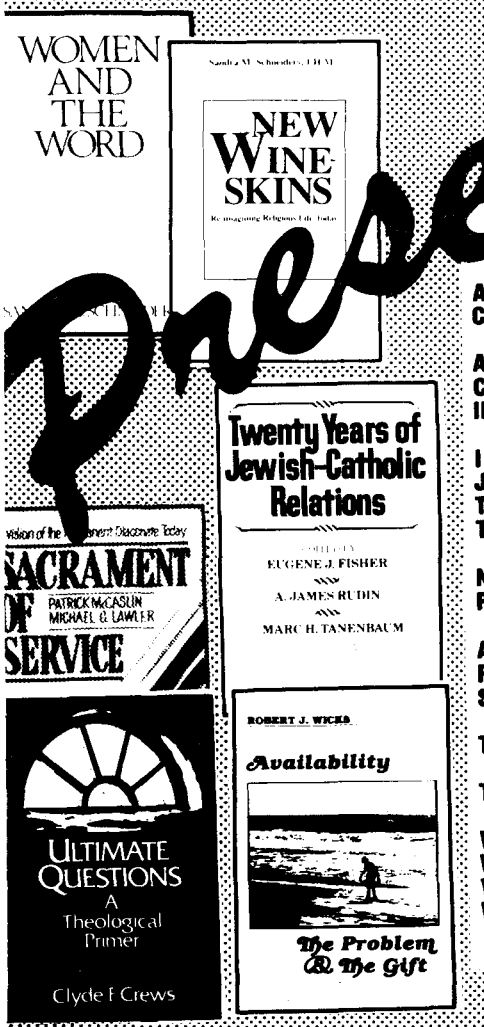

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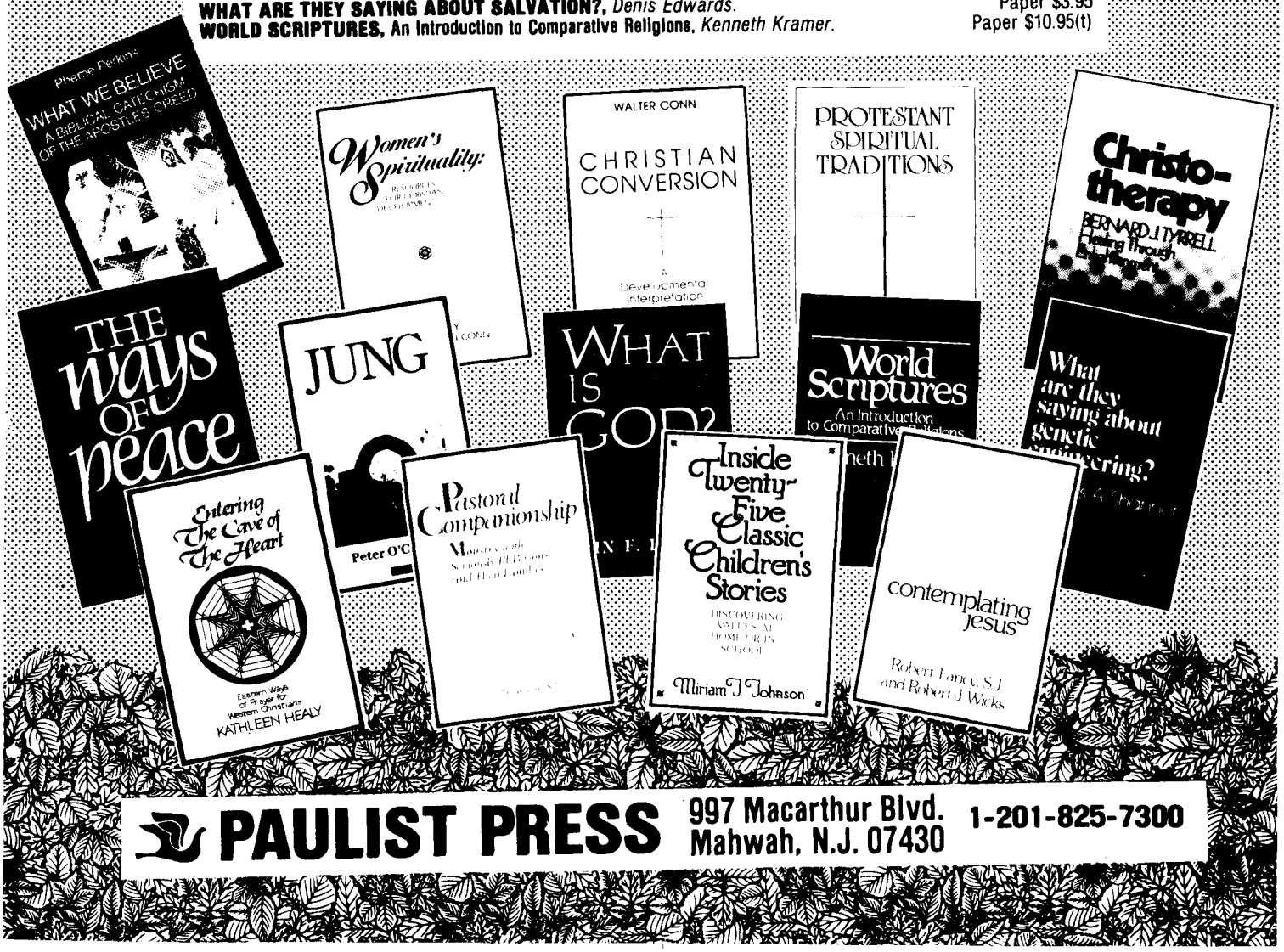

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cute scowl. But where did she get those shampooed braids?

Hannah plays Eyla, a Cro-Magnon orphan adopted by a roving Neanderthal clan, particularly one Iza, a medicine woman played by Pamela Reed, a fine actress currently on Broadway in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Eyla is unfortunately abused and persecuted (sexually) by a young thug named Broud. Alienated from the center of the clan, she develops some peculiar skills, especially in mastering a slingshot none of the clan males knows how to use. Since hunting by women is taboo, Eyla must be punished; but, since she saves a child with her skill, she is simply exiled. She survives, returns, and brings about the wicked Broud's downfall.

The script (from John Sayles, writer-director of *The Secaucus Seven, Lianna,* and the sci-fi fantasy, *The Brother from Another Planet*) thus provides a loose kind of feminist anthropology. This is all to the good, but could have been much stronger if resistance to Eyla was shown as part of a believable cultural context, not merely the result of Broud's plain old badness. Instead of a real clash of cultural outlooks, the film simply documents that, back then, there were male chauvinist pigs, here presented as cut-em-out and paste-em-up cardboard villains. The film illustrates the cliché that if you repress women, you are a Neanderthal. Implicitly it reaffirms that old chestnut, the progressive view of history, which conveniently ignores the fact that matriarchies ruled some Stone Age societies, even perhaps among the Neanderthals.

Leaving fact (and real imagination) aside, the film moves at a static pace; it is bitterly ironic that the only compelling scene is a rape. Miss Reed is reduced to coughing deeply to indicate she is dying. The names of the secondary characters become a confusing gibberish of Goov, Grod, Vorn, Zoug, Dorv, Droog, Crug for the males, and for the females, Aba, Uka, Oga, Ovra, Uba, Aga, Ebra, and Ika. While I was wondering where Okra was, Eyla had a boy named Durc — a homonym chosen to assure us, I suppose, that he carries the seeds of the Beach Boys. The only good thing about the film was the scenery of British Columbia. At least that was primitive.

I DON'T know what's coming over me. Here we have *Brazil*, a highly acclaimed futuristic satire from Terry Gilliam, the prime animator for Monty Python television and such Python spin-offs as *And Now for Something Completely Different* and *Time Bandits*. The film had been held back from release by Universal Pictures, which decided the movie was too long and pessimistic. Gilliam ran an ad campaign in *Variety*, claiming that production ogres were censoring his "art"; he received surprise support when the Los Angeles film critics, after seeing the movie in private screening, voted it the best film of 1985. The embarrassed studio surrendered, and released the film to raves in New York. As a result of this advance hoopla, I went to the film expecting to see one of the great triumphs of art over Philistinism. But I came out thinking that Universal was right.

Brazil gets off to a good start, but zooms downhill. It's set in a futuristic backwater, not Brazil, but a mix of England and Nazi Germany where gadgets and totalitarianism abound. The gadgets are both primitive and upscale: computers are hooked up to rusty typewriters; central heating and air conditioning are conducted through houses in elongated reptilian tubing that seems to tie everything in knots. The funniest scenes in the film involve repairmen trying to master all this afunctional junkheap, and getting lost in paper work almost as tangled. Officials, at the Orwellian Ministry of Information Retrieval, move like robots and wear uniform gray; lower-class workers, like Orwell's proles, live in horrid tenement flats strewn with garbage. *Brazil*'s production design itself stirs comic horror.

The plot is also initially engaging. A computer error leads to the frightening arrest of an innocent prole named Buttle instead of a terrorist named Tuttle. The mistake comes to the attention of a government bureaucrat (Jonathan Pryce) whose boss (Ian Holm) is more concerned about papering over the error than about Buttle's fate. So is Pryce until he recognizes that a lovely neighbor of Buttle's who complains about his arrest is (literally) the girl of his dreams, a development which Gilliam inserts into the screenplay with lyrical aplomb. So far, so good: *Brazil* seems an offbeat, sardonic *1984*.

Midway, however, *Brazil* becomes boring. The plot moves slowly and predictably toward a boy-meets-girl romance and tragedy in which the bizarre twists and turns (including too many in the dreaming mode) do little to mask the ultimate result. Along the way, Gilliam mindlessly repeats the initial jokes — on the twisted morality of the upper classes, on (British) aplomb in face of inhumanity, on torturers with nice family lives, on plastic surgery, on fancy restaurants, on religion, funerals, consumerism, bureaucracy, you-name-it. With each repetition, the force of Gilliam's satire is progressively weakened, especially since the butts of his jokes behave more and more absurdly; they are not believable as villains because they are not believable as human beings.

Gilliam is a comic who doesn't know when to stop. *Brazil* reminded me not just of the tedious last half of *And Now for*

Elisabeth Murawski

Climbing the Family Tree

I don't know the color of your hair,
but my flesh, heiress,
you race through my wrists

and I cannot say good-by.
I take all of you on like a fighter,
spar and jog, dog-star

calling up the dead.
I want your wrists tied to mine,
this light wind welding us one

family filling up the blue sky,
the grafted hum drumming
the iron knocker.

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Something Completely Different, but also of *If* and *Brittania Hospital*, two other English films (by satirist Lindsay Anderson) that had good premises but died when prolonged. His truck chases are also much too long and the dream sequences (which eventually depict Lowry battling symbolic monsters to save his beloved) pretentious. In one of the final fantasies, the girlfriend is transformed into Lowry's mother — give us a break. Gilliam soon resorts to that other stand-by of sophomoric art, scatology, with some stupid sewage jokes and one offensive funeral scene. After a point, Gilliam simply has nothing to say; snazzy editing and overstatement can't conceal the fact.

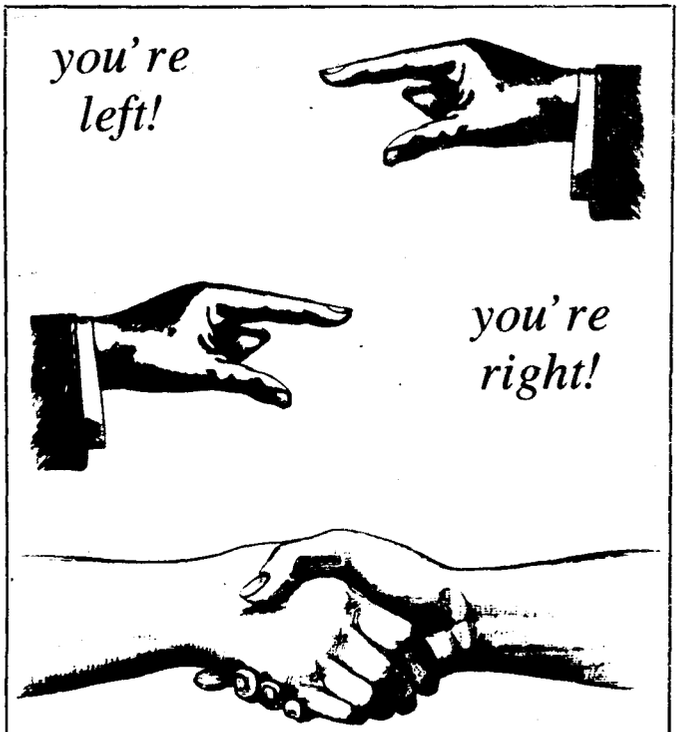
I can just see people exiting from this film: half the audience will like it, tutored by modernism to admire anything, especially anything ugly, that trashes authority. Others will be perplexed by *Brazil*, but pretend to like it because they are supposed to. After all, it's "art." What's more, Gilliam must be a genius because the studio must be wrong. It only goes to show that the story of the emperor with no clothes applies just as well to the cultural left as to the right, to the ironists of pomp and ceremony as much as to their practitioners. For my part, I didn't know which to turn in after seeing *Brazil*, my film critic's license or my aged (and almost defunct) professional anti-establishment card. If the film had been less praised, perhaps I would have been less angry. But I would still have been bored.

SOME TIME after writing this review, I read an interview with Gilliam in the *New York Times*, which provides some insight into what we might loosely call his thought. Gilliam made three points toward the end of the piece. First, he said, he's a transplanted American, who left the United States because when he was enjoying sunsets he could no longer tell whether he was enjoying them for their own sake or because he had seen them in too many commercials. Second, *Brazil* is a "kind of cinematic mugging. If people complain it's terrifying, well that's just what a nightmare is like." Finally, "I like being perverse. It's the only kind of uniqueness left."

Such statements are enough to make one reconsider Plato's ban on artists. Gilliam has no self-consciousness about the fact that by now extravagant perversity is not unique, but part of a dogma and a tired one at that. His second statement embodies the imitative fallacy — that is, art ought to reproduce exactly the sensations of the experience it describes — which, in the case of a cinematic mugging, assumes a masochistic audience. More tired modernism.

The first point actually struck me as key. It certainly registers Gilliam's hostility to modern capitalism. But it betrays extraordinarily reactive thought. Gillliam is so obsessed by complexities he forgets the simplicity of his own emotions. It's natural to like sunsets, and natural, if manipulative, for advertisers to exploit that liking. Gilliam makes this process apocalyptic because exaggeration serves to intensify his sense of victimization: see how bad "they" are, he moans, they've gone and spoiled the sky for me. This is the kind of exaggeration that so mars *Brazil*.

TOM O'BRIEN



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Religious Book Week: CRITICS' CHOICES

Nathan A. Scott, Jr.

NATHAN A. SCOTT, JR., *William R. Kenan Professor of Religious Studies and professor of English at the University of Virginia, is currently president of the American Academy of Religion. His most recent book is* The Poetics of Belief *(University of North Carolina).*

IN response to *Commonweal*'s invitation to speak briefly of books that have proved for me to be particularly engaging in recent months, I am prompted to say a few words about two. I would mention first of all a book I read with considerable pleasure during this past Christmastide — Richard Wightman Fox's *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (Pantheon, $19.95, 340 pp.). It has been with some surprise that I have noticed in recent years that my great teacher at Union Theological Seminary, who was so towering a figure in American intellectual life in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s, is now one only vaguely known about by young intellectuals, and one with whose legacy they appear not to feel obliged to come to terms.

So, on turning to Mr. Fox's book, I was eager to see how this young historian at Reed College reckons with a thinker who, since his death in the late spring of 1971, has by no means lost his claim to be regarded as, after Jonathan Edwards, the most creative theologian in the American tradition. It was with much pleasure that I found his reassessment of Niebuhr to be marked by a fine intelligence and probity and sensitiveness. In its purely biographical dimension the book lacks any notable richness or complication, for, in this range of things, it rarely risks any deep inquiry into much that "asks" for extensive probing and exploration.

Perhaps by dint of his being too young to have had any direct experience of the man himself, Mr. Fox's portrayal of the spirit and character of Niebuhr's personality is sometimes skewed just enough to be a little misleading. One small example: in speaking of Niebuhr's electrifying style of delivery on the platform and in the pulpit, he says: "One did not merely listen to Niebuhr: one watched him strut, gyrate, jerk, bend, and quake." Now it is true that, when he was at full stretch, he did indeed gyrate and jerk — "his whole lanky frame . . . in motion." But never did he "strut" — and such small mistakes at various points do, unfortunately, blemish the portrait of the man which the book advances. But Mr. Fox's account of the development of Niebuhr's thought will, I believe, have to be regarded as the definitive reconstruction of one of the most important intellectual careers on the American scene in this century. I warmly commend his book to those not yet acquainted with the man who produced such landmarks as *Moral Man and Immoral Society, Beyond Tragedy, The Nature and Destiny of Man, The Irony of American History,* and *The Self and the Dramas of History.*

Then I have also found myself recently fascinated by another book of quite a different sort — Jaroslav Pelikan's *Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture* (Yale University, $22.50, 270 pp.). Though it is based on a prodigious learning, it is a learning that is here deployed so gracefully and unobtrusively that this book will be found compellingly attractive by any cultivated reader who wants not so much a life of Jesus or a history of theological reflection on Jesus as an account of the various roles that have been played by Jesus of Nazareth "in the general history of culture." For this is what Mr. Pelikan provides in a book of uncommon brilliance which, through a series of eighteen chapters, takes us all the way from Jesus as rabbi in the setting of first-century Judaism to the Jesus who as Liberator was the great inspiration of Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. and who today is the Man Who Belongs to the World. And the result is a book that wonderfully illumines every major moment in the history of Western culture and that reveals how indelibly this culture is marked by the Man Christ Jesus.

Phyllis Trible

PHYLLIS TRIBLE *is a professor of Old Testament studies at Union Theological Seminary. Her most recent book is* Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives *(Fortress Press).*

MY LIBRARY runneth over. Biblical books published in 1985 spill from shelf to floor as they challenge me to find quality in the midst of abundance.

A textbook makes a substantial beginning. Norman Gottwald's *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Fortress Press, $26.95, 702 pp.) highlights recent research alongside traditional scholarship. No longer can we call Genesis, for example, a compilation of patriarchal sources. Artfully constructed narratives produce a magnificent saga about the mothers as well as the fathers of faith. Nor can we settle for surface accounts of Israel's origins in the land. They may owe more to peasant revolt than to conquest and infiltration. With such unfoldings Gottwald gives new content to an old genre. Replete with charts, maps, and bibliographies, the text works well in introductory courses.

For theological stimulation, I recommend Jon Levenson's analysis of two religious foci, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Winston Seabury, $18.50, 227 pp.). Sinai proclaims Torah, commanding obedience to God and giving redemption from bondage. Its message imposes a choice that affirms divine meaning in the flux and flow of history. By contrast, Zion offers the Temple, a zone of perfection within the world of profanity. Stressing the constancy of God, it seeks meaning above and outside of history. If these differences sound familiar, Levenson subverts the usual evaluation of them. By showing Scripture's adept handling of diversity, he undercuts the temptation to deem Sinai "good" and Zion "bad."

Similarly provocative is *Exodus and*

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Revolution by the political philosopher Michael Walzer (Basic Books, Inc., $15.95, 177 pp.). Moving back and forth between the Exodus story and Western history, he finds in the former a paradigm for such diverse revolutions as the Cromwellian, American, Marxist, and liberationist. For all who are interested in the history of an idea, its manipulation and fulfillment, the study offers fascinating data, sound critique, and sometimes disturbing implications.

Another volume I have read with enthusiasm centers on tragedy: W. Lee Humphreys' *The Tragic Vision and the Hebrew Tradition* (Fortress Press, $9.95, 151 pp.). With literary sensitivity, it dares to explore the underside of faith. Not only flawed human beings but the savage god confronts us in the stories of Saul, Job, and Jeremiah. Though the Bible as a whole rejects a tragic perspective, its presence in the canon witnesses to experience and counters triumphalism. This sobering book yields a strange comfort. Also approaching Scripture from the underside is *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, edited by Letty M. Russell (Westminster Press, $10.95, 166 pp.). Written by women who refuse to give up on the sacred text, the essays provoke, tantalize, and prod. Here the faint-hearted may tremble or take courage. But surely they and other readers will find quality in all these books: new understanding of Scripture that makes a difference.

Robert C. Neville

ROBERT C. NEVILLE *teaches religious studies and philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. His latest book is* The Tao and the Daimon *(SUNY Press, 1982).*

JOHN RAWLS'S *Theory of Justice* was the most pointed and original statement of classic liberalism from the time of its publication in 1971 until 1985, when it took second place to *Common Courtesy: In Which Miss Manners Solves the Problem that Baffled Mr. Jefferson*, by Judith Martin (Atheneum, $10.95, 70 pp.). Miss Manners's superiority to Mr. Rawls, not entirely tongue in cheek, consists in the recognition that manners equal, if not exceed, morals in importance for a liberal civilization, for manners make it possible to sustain irreconcilable differences, where all Rawlsian algorithms for moral agreement fail, and still live with the result. Martin demonstrates the importance of the private sphere, not as the set of affairs left over after public business, but as the defining context of what is genuinely worthwhile.

If one is not interested in perfecting the liberal civilization, I highly recommend Alphonso Lingis's *Excesses: Eros and Culture* (SUNY, $9.95, 163 pp.), which is wholly illiberal and not civilized at all in Miss Manners's sense. Lingis's point, I believe, is that there are experiences of immeasurable intensity at the heart of civilizations, creating the human from deeper-than-civilized roots. He returns us to those experiences with powerful, personal, often poetic discourse. By means of a bizarre Grand Tour of Excesses he shows the boundary as well as the unique essence of each of the civilizations he visits.

Whereas Lingis's is a wholly ahistorical treatment of human excess, Thomas J.J. Altizer's *History as Apocalypse* (SUNY, $10.95, 265 pp., 1985) finds quite enough excess, thank you, in history's own development. In a series of brilliant studies of the epic, from classical Greek and biblical times through Augustine, Dante, Milton, Blake, and Joyce, Altizer shows how Western identity is historical identity, moving in an apocalyptic dialectic to its own dissolution. Those fortunate enough to have attended his plenary lecture at the 1985 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion will remember Altizer's reading of a portion of this text. Where Lingis is a poet, Altizer is our most accomplished preacher.

For depth of reflection we are privileged to have Edith Wyschogrod's *Spirit in Ashes: Hegel, Heidegger, and Man-Made Mass Death* (Yale, $22.50, 256 pp., 1985). Her thesis is that the phenomenon of mass death in our century has alienated us finally from the approach to death which takes it to be a spiritual task. Rather, death happens with the impersonality of arbitrary and indefinitely unending cuts in a Zenonian line: Zeno's paradoxes give us the best (alas) model for death in our age. Through her analyses of Hegel and Heidegger, she pushes beyond their commitment to the "authenticity" model and reveals their limitations as well as suggestions. This is a masterful blend of scholarship, originality, and serious passion. Our religious voices are diverse, clear, and on the way to something.

Susan Annette Muto

SUSAN ANNETTE MUTO *is a professor in the field of literature and religion and director of the Institute of Formative Spirituality at Duquesne University. Author and co-author of thirteen books, her latest,* Meditation in Motion, *will be published this coming fall by Doubleday.*

IN the field of spirituality, as both formative and informative, several books have guided and inspired me in the past year. Foremost among them would be Volume Two of Adrian van Kaam's seminal five volume series of the science of human and spiritual formation or, simply, formative spirituality. Volume One on *Fundamental Formation* (1983) laid the groundwork for a comprehensive theory of the person as vital, functional, transcendent, and always embedded in a sociohistorical formative field. This book on *Human Formation* (Crossroad, $24.95, 271 pp.) deals with the empirical aspects of our always emerging, distinctively human life-form — through dispositions like appreciation, appraisal, and awe — as indispensable powers facilitating the entire process of development from childhood to maturity. Particularly fascinating is the author's presentation of "formative imagination, memory, and anticipation"

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in relation to the "dispositional identity" of each person. Most extensive is his treatment of the disposition of awe and its capacity to awaken the transcendent longings that give rise to religious and ideological faith traditions. An original thinker of the highest caliber, van Kaam plans in Volume Three, to be issued this year, to develop further his practical theory of the dispositions of the heart (like gentleness and firmness, community and privacy). Volume Four will be on scientific formation (methodology and practice) and Volume Five on Christian formation.

Any student of spirituality will acknowledge, as I have done in my classes, the enormous contribution of the Paulist Press through its publication of the Classics of Western Spirituality. One book in the series that provides access to the treasury of spirituality of the undivided church is *John Cassian – Conferences*, trans. Colm Luibheid (Paulist, $9.95, 208 pp.). Cassian interprets the monastic movements in the desert of Egypt and Syria at the turn of the sixth century. He provides a living portrait of the men and women who chose to live a radical God-centered witness rather than succumb to the chaos of the civil order occurring in the Mediterranean world. Drawing upon his own experience as a monk and trusting the primitive simplicity and purity of heart where Eastern and Western spirituality meet, Cassian wrote twenty-four conferences of which nine of the most famous on such themes as discernment, renunciation, prayer, perfection, spiritual knowledge and the gifts of God are selected for the Paulist edition. Not only are the *Conferences* an invaluable source-book of early monasticism, a true masterpiece of spiritual history and theology, they are also a parable or an extended metaphor, as the translator indicates, of the complexity awaiting anyone who seeks to pursue the life of the spirit.

In the category of edifying reading, I would include biographies, letters, and autobiographies of complex souls whose faith journeys, while being utterly unique, also offer sincere seekers sound and universal advice. Peter Hebblethwaite's definitive biography of Angelo Roncalli, *Pope John XXIII: Shepherd of the Modern World* (Doubleday, $19.95, 550 pp.) fulfills two criteria that I expect in books of this genre: its historical accuracy, vivid details, and accurate quotations *inform* the reader about Pope John; its commentary, novelistic presentation, and reverence for the subject *inspire* one to make God the center of one's life as this great pope of the people did. It is wonderful to relive those early days of Vatican Council II and the visionary encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*.

It is the paradox of formation in the midst of deformation, of consonance out of dissonance that surfaces again and again in the correspondence published under the title *The Hidden Ground of Love: The Letters of Thomas Merton on Religious Experience and Social Concerns*, edited by William H. Shannon (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, $27.95, 669 pp.). Merton restores the old art of spiritual direction, social commentary, and sundry reflection through letter-writing. The collection features hundreds of letters to such key figures in Merton's life as Catherine de Hueck Doherty, Daniel J. Berrigan, Dorothy Day, and Rosemary Radford Ruether. To them he is able to voice his consuming concern about a world on the brink of global violence that seemingly has forgotten God. The letters are as witty as they are informative, as amusing as they are provocative. Merton's essential humanness emerges in material never intended for publication. Hence the book is really an autobiography in letter form. He asks questions and probes for answers with a greater sense of freedom than in his more censored writings. Thus the style is personal, intimate, lively, never stiff or didactic. What Merton wrote to Catherine Doherty in 1956 contains — as one could say of many of the letters — a message for today: "We have got to be people of hope, and to be so we have to see clearly how true it is that the hopes of a materialistic culture are the worst form of despair. We have to build a new world, and yet resist the world, while representing Christ in the midst of it."

(cut & mail)

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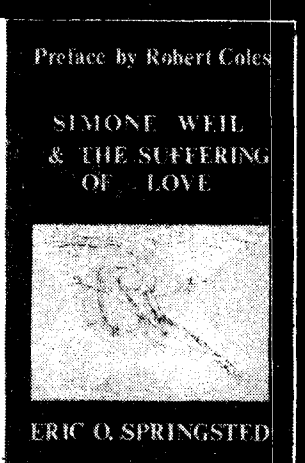

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David Herlihy

DAVID HERLIHY *is Henry Charles Lea Professor of Medieval History at Harvard University. His most recent book is* Medieval Households *(Harvard University Press).*

CATHOLIC churches misrepresent saints, particularly here in America. The saints we see are placid residents of their niches, not so much catching the eye as calming it. Little survives here in America of baroque saints, of athletic bishops with swirling vestments caught in dramatic poses. Our saints are tame.

This year, I have read several books about saints. I did not seek them out. They found me, in my capacity as a professor of history. All these books raised an issue as much theological as historical. How do saints relate to society? Are they models of correct behavior? Or do they, like the *perfecti* among the medieval Albigensians, impose impossible standards?

Jo Ann McNamara, *A New Song: Celibate Women in the First Three Christian Centuries* (Haworth Press, $29.95, 154 pp.) sees sanctity, and the virginity or chaste widowhood associated with it, as liberation for women. Virginity freed women from the tyranny of husbands and the tyranny of the state. And the church applauded virgins. The late ancient Christian cult of virginity — so strange to modern eyes — was primarily a celebration of women's freedom.

E.A. Thompson, *Who Was St. Patrick?* (St. Martin's, $21.95, 192 pp.) gives a hard-nosed analysis of the two surviving texts written by the obscure apostle of the Irish. He's the only man of his age, living outside the borders of the Roman Empire, to have left us Latin texts. Thompson ridicules the Patrician legends; probably too much. Legends, too, are part of history. His book, hardly edifying, is nonetheless valuable. He gets at the core of the saint's life, and leaves his reader wondering how these sparse and shallow roots could have produced such luxuriant growth.

Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls, Fourteenth Century Saints and Their Religious Milieu*, (University of Chicago, $24.00, 248 pp.) looks at the odd piety of the late Middle Ages, especially forbearance under suffering, much of it self-inflicted. An age of plagues, the period was one of suffering too. Styles of piety, styles of the times: he sets us thinking how one relates to the other.

Dominique Lapierre, *The City of Joy* (Doubleday, $17.95, 464 pp.) searches for saints in modern India. The story is centered on a slum of Calcutta, the size of two football fields, with a population in the tens of thousands. A Franco-Polish priest, Stephan Kovalski, settles there. Kovalski serves the poor well, but who are the saints? Those who serve or those who are served? The desperately poor, Kovalski himself believes, are the light of the world.

Saints somehow focus the needs, apprehensions, and hopes of society. They embody religion grappling with social faults. The historians of societies now recognize this. We should recognize it too; the saints are marching in.

Kenan B. Osborne

KENAN B. OSBORNE, O.F.M. *is professor of systematic theology at the Franciscan School of Theology and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California.*

BOOKS which treat of Jesus appear in abundance every year, which indicates that a final book on Jesus will never be written. This past year is no exception; a number of fine books on Jesus appeared. I would like to mention two works, not with the intent of saying that these are the two finest, but rather to say that these are two which deserve special mention. The first is Jaroslav Pelikan's *Jesus Through the Centuries* (Yale University, $22.50, 270 pp.). Pelikan is one of those superb scholars who roams easily through a wide network of scholarly material, and in this volume he moves from century to century, indicating the influence of Jesus in the political, social, and economic histories of the western world. The centrality of Jesus and the lordship of Jesus in the Christian appreciation of salvation history remain the theological pivots for the majority of the book. Nonetheless, these two ideas

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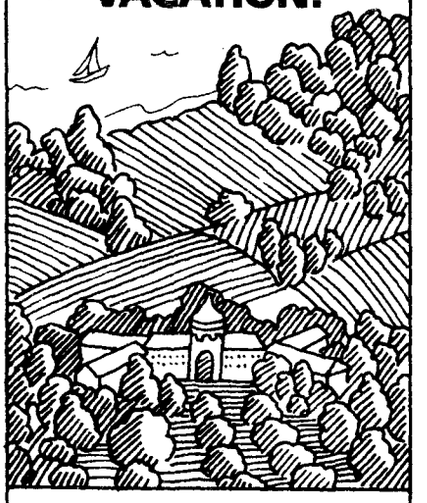

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are molded and nuanced by the various cultural changes which take place. The royal crucified Lord of the Byzantine period, the "monk who rules the world" of the medieval period, the "universal man" of the Renaissance period . . . these kinds of ideas give us a mirror of the way in which Jesus, Lord and Center, was seen and appreciated in various times. This is not a beginner's book on Jesus. In fact, one should have a good background on christology before reading this, but the book provides a historical grid into which christological ideas can be situated. It is written in a non-theological way, and for someone conversant in both theology and history it is a quite provocative book.

A second volume is William M. Thompson's, *The Jesus Debate: A Survey and Synthesis* (Paulist, $12.95, 437 pp.). Thompson presents two valuable considerations in this work: first of all, he presents a survey of the main trends and approaches to christology in what we might call the modern-contemporary period. By modern, I mean the bases in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for a renewed interpretation of Jesus, and by contemporary, I mean the framework within which current christology out of this previous background approaches the Jesus question. His explanation helps to explain the reasons for a changed outlook on the sources of christology and, therefore, on the interpretation of Jesus himself.

Secondly, Thompson is not content with a mere survey, but he attempts to put some sort of order and direction into the current flow of christological thought. For years Thompson has been working in the area of christology and has written on the subject in previous volumes. He offers a synthesis out of this long research, and in a very intriguing way addresses the issue of contemporary psychology, sociology, and ecology, and a possible interrelationship of these fields with a christology. In this sense the book is quite challenging. Again this should not be a first book on christology, but it should be a second. Although it is not a final word, the synthesis part helps the scholar to appreciate present-day changes, and to come to grips with a historically contemporary world in which any christology must ultimately be meaningful.

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Diana L. Eck

DIANA L. ECK *is Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies at Harvard University. She is the author of* Benares.

1985, the year of the Festival of India, has been a very good year for books in the history of religions, especially those on the traditions of India. Those I mention here are all books I snatched from the bookstore shelf the moment my eyes lit upon them, and I was not disappointed. The first is a delightful book by Wendy O'Flaherty, *Tales of Sex and Violence* (University of Chicago, $16.95, 145 pp.). It is safe to say that never has a more interesting book been written about the *Jaiminīya Brāhmana*. The Brahmanas, Vedic ritual texts, have long been maligned by scholars for what W.D. Whitney described as their "dull and uninteresting" nature, what Julius Eggeling spoke of as their "wearisome prolixity of exposition." I wish ardently they could both read *Tales of Sex and Violence*. Here O'Flaherty turns her imaginative mind to the exposition of the folkloric elements of the *Jaiminīya Brāhmana*, and reveals an earthy and even bawdy text, filled with stories about the Fear of Death, the Fear of God, the Fear of Wives, the Fear of Demonic Women — all in a world of danger where only the ritual power of sacrifice and chant can create order and safety.

O'Flaherty writes the forword to another of this year's treasures, Paul Courtright's *Ganeśa* (Oxford University, $29.95, 274 pp.), beginning with the exclamation, "This is a book I would have loved to have written!" Many others, myself included, could echo such a sentiment. Who has studied India, or spent time in India, and not come to love Ganeśa? This elephant-headed god delights and confounds the imagination. His pot belly is round from his love of sweetmeats; yet he dances daintily, and rides around upon a mouse. Courtright writes of this god from the standpoint of history, myth, and ritual. He pursues the theme of Ganeśa as the mediator — spatially, the lord of the threshold, and temporally, the lord of beginnings. As the lord of obstacles, who both poses and removes the obstacles we encounter, Ganeśa dances at the doorway of all our doings.

Another of this year's books that enriches our understanding of the religious traditions of India is Thomas Coburn's *Devī Māhātmya* (South Asia Books, $29.95, 362 pp.), the first modern in-depth study of the famous "Hymn to the Goddess." Coburn aptly subtitles the work "The Crystallization of the Goddess Tradition." He looks not only at the great hymn itself, but at the epithets of the Goddess and the earlier hymns and myths of the Goddess that surround and

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support the *Devī Māhātmaya*. This is a fine study by a superb scholar and is well worth the time and effort of anyone interested in the goddesses and the Goddess of the Hindu tradition.

Another splendid contribution is *Songs for the Bride: Wedding Rites of Rural India* by William G. Archer (Columbia University, $27.50, 181 pp.), who worked for years in the Indian Civil Service in Bihar. Archer died in 1979 and this volume has been skillfully edited by Barbara Stoler Miller in cooperation with Mildred Archer. The book makes accessible a delightful and important genre of village poems, songs really, from rural Bihar. They are sung by women, and sometimes by men, in the range of rites surrounding the wedding. Not only do we enjoy the songs of village India here, we also are drawn into a sensitive and intricate discussion of the rituals of marriage and the ritualized sharing of emotions that these songs convey.

Āditi: The Living Arts of India (Smithsonian, $27.00, $14.95 paper, 279 pp.) also brings us into village India. This lovely book was published for the Festival of India exhibit called "Āditi — A Celebration of Life." The focus of the exhibit, which is illustrated so beautifully in this book, was the ritual art and lore that surrounds the Hindu rites of passage and the calendrical festivals that are such a vibrant part of India's religious life. The major part of the book, written by Pria Devi and Richard Kurin, explores the early phases of the life cycle, showing ritual arts, such as a lamp with a cobra shaped handle carried by the sister of the bride at a wedding and a mirrored wedding blouse from Kutch. The book concludes with essays by Wendy O'Flaherty on "The Role of Myth in the Indian Life Cycle," Sudhir Kakar on "The Child in India," and Stella Kramrisch on "The Ritual Arts of India." This book presents, in photograph and text, some of the most marvelous treasures and vignettes from the microcosm of Indian village life, and reminds us of the Hindu wisdom, "In the microcosm lies the macrocosm."

Finally, this year has brought into English translation Annemarie Schimmel's remarkable book *And Muhammad Is His Messenger* (University of North Carolina, $32, $9.95 paper, 377 pp.), a study of the veneration of the Prophet in Muslim piety. For some time now, scholars have steered clear of the misnomer "Muhammadanism," knowing that Muslims are not, strictly speaking, followers of Muhammad, but followers of God, before whom the proper response is Islam, "submission." And yet clearly Muhammad has had a unique role in Muslim piety: not "worshipped," to be sure, but "venerated" nonetheless. Schimmel explores such topics as the biographies and hagiographies of Muhammad, the importance of his blessing and intercession for Muslims, the significance of his night journey of ascent to Heaven, the names of Prophet, and the celebration of the Prophet's birthday. In fascinating and expansive detail, Schimmel explicates what it has meant, in Muslim practice and popular piety, to affirm the second line of the *shahāda*, "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His Messenger."

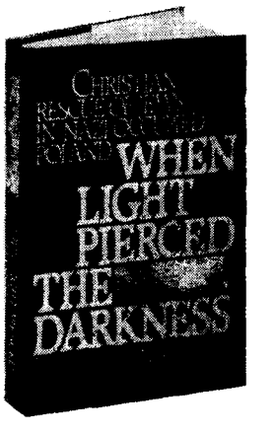
Eugene B. Borowitz

EUGENE B. BOROWITZ *is Professor of Jewish Religious Thought at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. He founded and edits* Sh'ma, *a journal of Jewish responsibiiity.*

FORTY or so years of intense intellectual life and the ever increasing flood of books and journals have left me strongly partial to things said compactly but well. I did not choose the following for this symposium because they were relatively short, though I note that they are, but because I think they will interest readers not in my field even as they interested me.

Arthur Peacocke's *Intimations of Reality* (University of Notre Dame Press, $4.95, 94 pp.) seems to me a model of learning, thoughtfulness, and literacy.

Hiding Jews: Who Helped and Why



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Years of reading and thinking about the philosophy of science and its relation to theology are here summarized and the issues clarified. Peacocke is open to many views while asserting his reaction to them clearly and persuasively.

A similar magisterial quality is evident in Bernard Lewis's *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton University Press, $17.50, 245 pp.). Lewis, after providing us with the necessary understanding of the Moslem context, traces the development and evolution of a socio-cultural tradition. His intriguing historical examples are deftly chosen and he expounds their greater significance with unusual felicity.

Perhaps I am stretching the calendaric limits to include *Halakhic Man* (Jewish Publication Society of America, $12.95, 164 pp.) by Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. This long awaited translation of a lengthy Hebrew essay of 1944 was for many years the only work by which those who were not his students could learn something of the extraordinary philosophic sweep of one of the great Talmudists and legal masters of contemporary Judaism. Having shown the possibilities of rationalism in Jewish Orthodoxy in this work, his more recent publications have moved on to explore its subjective side. What an extraordinary mind and soul is revealed here!

I liked Basil F. Herring's *Jewish Ethics and Halakhah for Our Time* (Ktav, $15, 243 pp.) because it showed so well how a thoughtful person, sensitized by modern ethics and informed by Western learning, can learn from the traditional sources he knows to be authoritative, and admirably apply them to life. I thought Rabbi Herring often underestimated the stringency of Jewish law and I take a more liberal, personalistic approach to Jewish ethics, but I was always enlightened by him and I think others will be.

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Drew Christiansen

DREW CHRISTIANSEN, S.J., *is assistant professor of social ethics at The Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California, and former director of the Center for Ethics and Social Policy of the Graduate Theological Union.*

TWO BIOGRAPHIES head my list for the best reading of 1985: Peter Hebblethwaite's *Pope John XXIII: Shepherd of the Modern World* (Doubleday, $19.95, 550 pp.) and Richard Fox's *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (Pantheon, $19.95, 340 pp.). To an ethicist like myself, the great interest of Hebblethwaite's biography of Pope John is the background it provides on the origins of John's social teaching.

The social theology of *Mater et Magistra*, for example, had roots in the social activism of the sometimes suspect bishops of northern Italy whom John emulated as long as ecclesiastical power politics permitted, and in the lay groups such as Opera dei Congressi, and later Catholic Action for whom the young Monsignor Roncalli served as a fund-raiser. *Pacem in Terris* grew not only out of John's role as a mediator in the Cuban missile crisis, but from the tolerance and the goodwill bred by his difficult service in Turkey and Bulgaria. Hebblethwaite also shows how John's plan for a council was in continuity with his lifelong interest in pastoral renewal deriving from his historical research on Charles Borromeo's reforms in Milan.

By contrast to Hebblethewaite's delineation of the quiet growth of John's character, Richard Fox's *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* presents the great American Protestant social ethicist as the very model of the activist intellectual, immersed in unremitting controversy, writing columns, founding journals, running for office, and consulting with men of power. Fox sees Niebuhr through the eyes of his brother Richard as a liberal despite himself, always intent on transforming the world. H. Richard, the secret hero of the book, is credited with moving his brother to the deeper theological reflection in *The Nature and Destiny of Man*. For this reader seeing Niebuhr's thought in the context of his life posed gnawing questions about Niebuhr's "Christian realism." Is it a theological ethic at all, or is it simply a moralistic posture for men and women of action?

My third choice is John Patrick Diggins, *The Lost Soul of American Politics: Virtue, Self-Interest and the Foundations of Liberalism* (Basic Books, $23.95, 409 pp.). This long historiographical essay mounts a provocative argument: for more than two centuries individual self-interest has been at the heart of the American character. It is a book to be read alongside Robert Bellah and his associates' *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (University of California, $16.95, 355 pp.). For it takes head on those who contend that there was in the American past a civic republican ethic which properly understood the connections between freedom and virtue, individual and community.

Finally, I propose that for American Catholics the most important book of the year was Leonardo Boff's *Church: Charism and Power* (Crossroad, $14.95, 182 pp.). While I have reservations about Boff's populist, charismatic ecclesiology, his defense of human rights within the church sets agenda in which American Catholics — North and South — ought to play an important role. It should

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be a standard reference for bishops, religious superiors, university presidents, theologians, canonists, and active laypeople.

Christine Downing

CHRISTINE DOWNING *is a professor of religious studies at San Diego State University and author of* The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine *(Crossroad).*

THE two books that have moved me most this past year are both novels. Though my own understanding of womanist spirituality has been deepened by both, neither is in a literal sense the work of a feminist theologian. Perhaps what most needs to be said now can most effectively be expressed in fictional form.

Cassandra (Translated by Jan Van Hurck. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1984, $16.95, 305 pp.) is a retelling by the East German novelist, Christa Wolf, of the familiar epic and tragic tales associated with the Trojan war from the perspective of the prophetess who was doomed to speak out against her own people in full recognition that she will not be heard and, indeed, will be blamed for the very disasters against which she tries to warn. The process of this young woman's coming to consciousness, coming to discover the self-destructiveness inherent in heroism and taking on the burden of bearing witness against it, is beautifully told. Even more powerful for me are the four essays which accompany the novel; here Wolf shows how Cassandra has come to server her as prototype for her own witnessing to the disastrous fate she sees ahead for her own people, for us, for humankind. With passionate clarity she wonders whether the exaggerated celebration of autonomy and power, the violent opposition to nature, which have brought us to our present plight might have been mitigated had woman had more voice in the last three millenia. She wonders if it can make a difference that we now have a voice — perhaps it is already too late to avert the destruction of our species and of much of the other life with which we share this planet, but perhaps it is still possible to create a different consciousness, one which would sing not of the arms and the man but of the "inconspicuous, the precious everyday, the concrete."

Isabel Allende's novel, *The House of the Spirits* (Translated by Magda Bogin, Knopf, $17.95, 368 pp.), does this. Like Wolf she does not flinch from the horrors of racial and class conflict, from the violence that men have imposed on women. She tells the story of three generations of women and the man who is their husband, father, and grandfather, with a blend of realism and fantasy that may remind us of Marquez and yet is entirely her own. Allende is a wonderful storyteller and I found myself utterly absorbed in her magically gifted women and in the

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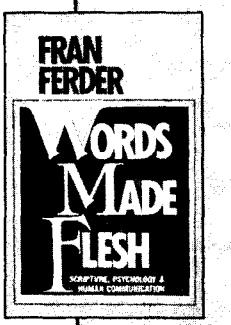

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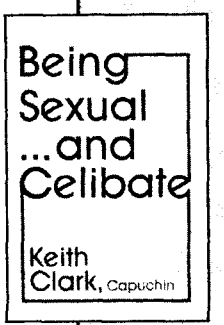

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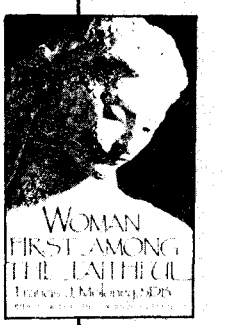

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painful, tumultous events which they endure — yet still found myself unprepared for the beauty of the ending. I found there a transcendence of revenge, a commitment to ending the spiral of hatred, a rendering of love and forgiveness so honest, so compelling as to renew my own love for us, for our species, and my own hope.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 98)

agreement.

— The NCCC is an excellent organization that does wonderful work in the name of the church. Its leadership is composed of outstanding men and women who dedicate their considerable talents to very good purposes. But that leadership can and does make some decisions which will at times provoke vigorous disagreement from some members. When that happens it seems very appropriate that dissent be forcefully expressed in letters to the organization's leadership. It is not especially remarkable that protestors might insist that an invitation to a keynote speaker should be withdrawn when they find that the honoree's public record on an important issue is very objectionable. That sort of thing happens all the time in large organizations.

— Governor Cuomo's assigned topic as keynote speaker was to be "A Just Tax System and the Church." It seems unsurprising that some would find special irony in that assignment, since he is one of several governors who have been especially insistent that tax dollars be used to pay for abortions.

— To its credit, the NCCC seeks to advocate on behalf of the most vulnerable members of society. As one protesting bishop put it, the NCCC ought, then, to be in the forefront in the fight against abortion which leads to the deliberate slaying of 1½ million unborn babies each year in the U.S. alone. He argued that the organization should remain committed to vigorous advocacy to protect the lives of those yet-unborn babies who are surely among the most innocent and most vulnerable members of the human family. It seemed to him that an invitation to Governor Cuomo to serve as keynote speaker at the NCCC annual meeting does not reflect that kind of commitment. His reaction does not strike me as unreasonable. Nor does it seem to me that he should be expected to refrain from forcefully expressing his reaction because he is a bishop.

About forty years ago I became a faithful reader of *Commonweal*, partly because I was impressed by the care with which it presented a balanced and fair portrayal of difficult problems. I do not find the editorial in question to be a good example of that care.

EDWARD L. MAILLET
Executive Director, Catholic Charities,
Diocese of Tulsa

The editors reply:

Edward L. Maillet, and Phyllis Zagano attempt to construct plausible arguments why Governor Cuomo should not have been invited to address the Catholic Charities meeting. Readers who recall our editorial, or return to it now, will discover, however, that these letters do not really deal with the specific incident we considered and the issues it raised.

Mr. Maillet, for example, claims that we tried to "'pass off" Governor Cuomo's record on abortion as an "anti-abortion strategy." No such thing. Our point was simply that Governor Cuomo has *spoken to* anti-abortion strategy — in his Notre Dame address primarily. And that we believe his prudential argument — about the need for consensus to precede legislative restriction — is "more right than wrong." Having in mind, however, some questions about the governor's reading of the current consensus, we went on to say: "This doesn't mean his position is sacrosanct, or devoid of political calculation, or should be immune to political pressure. . . . There are legitimate questions that Pennsylvania's bishops, or any other group, could press on Mario Cuomo."

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Nor did we contest the right of the NCCC members to exercise their concern about whom the organization consorts with, and what political messages that may convey — matters which occupy most of Mr. Maillet's letter. Those points, however, are simply not adequate to the specific incident at issue.

As our editorial stated, "Governor Cuomo's decision not to support the U.S. bishops' effort to replace *Roe v. Wade* with a ban on abortion does not distinguish him from many other political figures, Catholics included. What does distinguish him is that he has offered a reasoned defense of his chosen course," on traditional grounds of prudence, even while he gave "unqualified assent to the church's teaching on human life." For this, the Pennsylvania bishops treated him as devious and disloyal: "No other politician has so elaborately rationalized opposition," they wrote, "to the bishops' [anti-abortion] efforts." The bishops went on to compare an invitation to Cuomo to an invitation to "a racist." In the concrete, it makes a difference to us, as it does not to Mr. Maillet, that this denunciation came not just from legitimate "members" of the NCCC but from a state conference of Catholic bishops. In the concrete, it makes a difference that this protest was not simply "forcefully expressed," but that it totally blurred questions of fundamental dissent from church teaching and of prudential difference over policy.

The effect of such blurring can be readily seen in Ms. Zagano's letter, where she casually describes Cuomo as "a politician who dissents from Catholic teaching." Ms. Zagano is no uninformed observer but an erstwhile academician now employed by the New York archdiocese. Is she just being inexcusably careless in her wording — or purposely misrepresenting the governor's position?

The Pennyslvania bishops were worried about how the NCCC invitation might appear to "the average person." We would submit that to "the average person," a whole series of public gestures by bishops, this one included, looks as if the American Catholic hierarchy is systematically anathematizing Catholic politicians who disagree with the bishops' *political program* as regards abortion — in a manner utterly different from anything the bishops have done concerning their political positions on nuclear arms, poverty, military intervention in Central America, etc., etc. If this inconsistent and unwarranted pattern goes unchallenged, it may abet pro-life efforts in the short-run — and provoke an angry reaction from enough independent-minded Catholics to diminish considerably the church's social influence, injuring seriously its teaching credibility in the area of abortion, much as long since happened in the area of contraception. This problem, our editorial pointed out, "*will* have to be faced." Our correspondents do not face it.

THE EDITORS

Misleading account

Boca Raton, Fla.

To the Editors: In his review of Shirley Christian's book, *Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family* [*Commonweal*,

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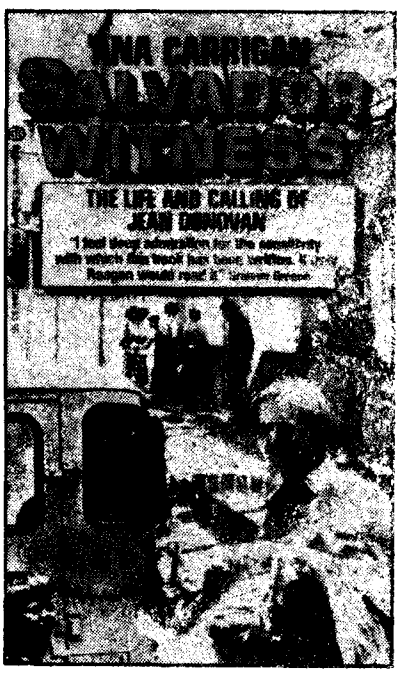

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November 1], Robert E. White says that the Sandinistas "were willing to give command of their combined armies to a declared anti-Marxist. The book tells how only six months before the final victory . . . Daniel and Humberto Ortega . . . 'offered to make Pastora supreme military commander of the United Sandinista front.' Had . . . Eden Pastora accepted the proffered title and power, he could well have become the maximum leader of Nicaragua instead of going into exile and armed opposition."

In fact, White distorts the sentence from Christian's book by leaving out pertinent information. After relating how Pastora was considered too "bourgeois" and ideologically inconsistent by some Sandinista leaders and how a proposal to give him a seat on the FSLN directorate fell through, Christian notes that the "move" by the Ortegas "was presumably linked to the desire to retain the assistance of General Torrijos [of Panama] and outgoing President Perez [of Venezuela], both of whom wanted Pastora to be the dominant figure in the FSLN. That, too, encountered opposition. Humberto Ortega traveled to Cuba during this time, and when he returned to Costa Rica, he and his brother announced that Pastora was military commander of the Southern Front, the name used for the military theater coming together in Costa Rica, but excluding anything organized from within Nicaragua or from across the northern border in Honduras" (Christian, p. 89).

There are several things to note. First, the Ortega brothers were only willing to offer Pastora the position to placate Torrijos and Perez. Moreover, given the sad history of Bernardino Larios, which Mr. White presumably knows (Christian, pp. 122-123, 135), it is doubtful that the Sandinistas would have tolerated Pastora for long in this hypothetical case of "what if." Second, Christian makes it clear that Pastora was not offered the position of supreme military commander — it was an idea that was briefly floated for the benefit of his supporters. Thus Pastora, contrary to what White suggests, did not reject an offer that was never made *in toto*. As soon as Humberto Ortega returned from Cuba, Pastora was relegated to a comand *outside* Nicaragua, and the idea of his promotion was dropped. In short, Mr. White's account is, at best, misleading.

STEVEN BLAKEMORE

The author replies:

Washington, D.C.

Steven Blakemore concentrates his energies on a trivial point. Whatever the circumstances and motivation, it is a fact that the Ortega brothers proposed making Eden Pastora supreme military commander of the Unified Sandinista Front.

This move by the Ortegas was only one of several examples I cited which demonstrate that the Sandinistas came to power not as committed ideologues, but as pragmatic revolutionaries willing to work with disparate revolutionaries willing to work with disparate elements to bring about radical change. Mr. Blakemore did not dispute this central thesis.

That the Ortegas may have made this offer to placate President Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela and General Omar Torrijos of Panama only underlines the willingness of the Sandinistas to listen and respond to the concerns of Western leaders.

ROBERT E. WHITE

The shoe fits

Swampscott, Mass.

To the Editors: Having read both Shirley Christian's book, *Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family* and Robert E. White's review of it [*Commonweal*, November 1], I was surprised that he maintains the Sandinistas "did not persecute the church." Ms. Christian is convincing in her documentation of precisely this point, as is Humberto Belli in *Christians Under Fire*. In addition, Mr. White seems to think that it is necessary to follow Leninist theory to install a "Leninist system." In fact, the Sandinistas adapted Marxist-Leninist theory to the circumstances of Nicaraguan "reality": they made Lenin "fit" the revolution and not the other way around.

DOROTHY LENIX

Corrections: In Mary C. Segers's review of *Ferraro: My Story* [January 31, 1986], two words were deleted at the top of page 56. The sentence should read: "Throughout the narrative we catch glimpses of an astute political professional able to do what public leaders must do — consider the consequences of laws, policies, statements, actions."

We also regret that in our editorial "Who Will Judge the Judges?" in the same issue, we misspelled the name of Professor Walter Dellinger of Duke Law School.

Finally, in the Religious Booknotes column for February 14, 1986, the name of Shambhala Publications found us dropping an h. We are eartily sorry.

THE EDITORS

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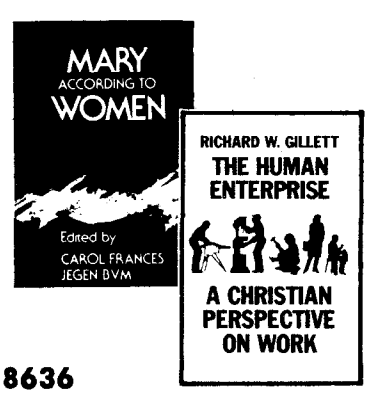

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